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Handmade gifts  
sure to delight

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BEIJING YOUTH DAILY



Film drama  
too real?

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Photo queen's  
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## Fast and focused

Liu Xiang, an Olympic hurdling champion and member of CPPCC, flies past the press on the opening day of two parliamentary sessions. Last year, the country managed remarkable economic growth at a time when the world was languishing from economic collapse.

The accomplishment has many in the international community curious about what new policies and far-reaching decisions the government may adopt during the coming legislative sessions. Members are expected to discuss new measures to boost the economy.

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### HOT POT!

# Rural teachers get pay boost with new school reform

By Chu Meng

Teachers in suburban and mountain areas in Beijing are seeing a pay increase this month as the education system rolls out new reforms to ensure fairness.

New pay standards took effect Monday, and the draft of the National Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020) was published last Sunday for public comment.

The municipal government and Beijing Municipal Commission of Education moved to equalize teacher pay between urban, subur-

ban and mountain areas.

"It means steady income and social welfare for teachers working in urban elementary and middle schools, and a significant increase for those teaching in remote areas," Chu Zhaozhui, a researcher from China National Institute of Educational Research, said.

The plan is part of a concentrated effort to draw new teaching graduates to the countryside.

The reform increased the income of rural teachers by 30 to 50 percent.

"My previous salary was about 3,000 yuan per month: 1,000 yuan for my pay and 2,000 yuan for

social welfare. Now my salary portion is up to 1,500 yuan," said Li Jie, a teacher of politics at Changping's Qianfeng Middle School.

Li said the salary portion was a direct fiscal investment by the Municipal Commission of Education, which received the money from the National Education Ministry. Teachers in remote mountain areas were given another 600-yuan allowance.

The reform will also improve facilities - school buildings, teaching equipment, libraries, sports facilities and lodging - at elementary and middle schools

in remote and poor areas.

According to the national outline, the government pledged to improve the quality of education and enable people to enjoy better education through more investment during the coming decade.

The amount of government investment in education annually will increase to 4 percent of the total GDP by 2012, according to the outline: it was 3.5 percent in 2008.

The top task for the next 10 years will be to guarantee equal access to education while improving its quality, Minister of Education Yuan Guiren said.

Chu, the researcher, also said pre-school education reform in Beijing is another hard nut to crack.

"Nationwide, up to 50 percent of the kids between the ages of 3 and 6 went to kindergarten last year. In Beijing that number was 43 percent," he said.

Beijing's 1,266 kindergartens can accommodate 226,000 young students: the problem is more than 420,000 are ready to enroll.

"The remarkable lack of pre-schools is not unique to Beijing. But the good news is 150 new kindergartens are coming this year," he said.

## Growing debate over GM foods in China

The Ministry of Agriculture rejected claims this week that it approved the import of genetically modified (GM) seeds for the cultivation of domestic food.

It was the first time the government responded to the growing debate over GM foods as it steps up domestic GM-engineering efforts to breed new crops that will ensure grain security.

Supporters and opponents have been debating since the ministry supported field trials of two strains of genetically-modified rice and corn last August.

With the country facing increasing pressure to feed 1.3 billion people, the government hopes disease-resistant crops will help address the growing shortage.

Commercialization of GM rice may be approved within the next three to four years, according to agricultural experts.

Xue Dayuan, a specialist on biodiversity at the Nanjing Research Institute of Environmental Sciences, said he is worried about hazards posed by the commercialization of GM rice to the health of consumers and the environment.

"I don't object to the commercialization of GM rice, but I'm concerned about its risks," he said.

He stressed that the country should be prudent about commercializing GM rice, since it would be the first country in the world to do so.

"If the world has not reached a consensus on GM food safety, it would be too proactive and risky to commercialize GM crops on a large scale," said Zheng Fengtian, vice-dean of the Rural and Agricultural Development Institute at Renmin University of China.

A recent survey, conducted by *China Daily* and sohu.com, suggested that more than 85 percent of respondents were worried about the health hazards of GM food.

But supporters said there is no evidence GM crops pose any risk to people or the environment.

Wu Yongning, a food safety specialist with the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said current studies have not proven GM food is harmful to consumers' health.

According to Wu, genetically modified food has to pass rigorous tests of toxicity, allergic potential

and field studies, before it is allowed onto supermarket shelves.

"I am not ruling out all possible risks, but the risks of GM food are no greater than those of traditional ones, given the heavy use of pesticide in growing traditional food," he said.

The State Council introduced a regulation in 2001 to ensure the safety of GM food, with strict provisions on its research, testing, production and marketing.

Huang Dafang, director of the Biotechnology Research Institute at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, said that since GM foods are less vulnerable to insects and diseases, fewer pesticides are needed to grow them.

According to the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Application, the expansion of GM planting from 1996 to 2006 saved 224,000 tons of pesticides from being sprayed onto crops.

In cutting down on the work required to spray crops, GM food has the potential to ease labor shortages in the countryside, the result of a large outbound movement of migrant workers, Huang said.

(Xinhua)



While some experts are suspicious, others say GM foods are safe and have the potential to ease labor shortage in the countryside.

IC Photo

## Tribe's 'Ant Village' will be bulldozed, rebuilt



The members of CPPCC were touched by the squalor in which the ant tribe lives.

IC Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing's landscape is no stranger to change. This year, that change is coming to Tangjialing, a group of eight small villages outside Northwest Fifth Ring Road.

The village is the notoriously crowded residential community favored by legions of new graduates employed by the IT companies at Shangdi industrial area.

The government of Haidian District released its blueprint for the village's renovation earlier this week.

The blueprint promises to rebuild the villages into public towers of suites leased to nearby white-collar workers, Lin Fusheng, governor of the district, said.

"Reconstruction of six of the eight villages in the area will be completed this year. The list includes Tangjialing, Xiaojiahe and Liulang-zhuang," the governor said.

Old residents will be relocated to the new towers, leaving 30 hectares of land for new public towers and IT office suits.

The public towers will be in the north, which borders the industrial area.

Tangjialing is one of eight small villages neighboring the Shangdi industrial area and Zhongguancun software park.

The village is home to 50,000 IT professionals, 17,000 of whom are fresh graduates who rent crowded compounds built by local farmers.

Most houses are poorly constructed and the village has earned a reputation as an "ant colony". Average rent ranges from 300 to 600 yuan per room.

Since the beginning of the year, an investigation has been underway to assess how much land is actually owned by each homeowner so that

the current villagers can be compensated with cash or apartments.

Land in Xibeiwang Village, located in the northwest corner of the block, will be auctioned off to real estate developers to raise money for the area's redevelopment.

"[The demolition] is still far off," Wang Juan, an IT worker from Henan Province who settled in the villages, said. "It has nothing to do with me."

But many tenants are concerned about the price of rent in the future towers.

"It sounds beautiful, but the prices will surely soar," Wang Juan said.

While jobs are plentiful - recruiting notices can be found on every wall, pole and website - the pay remains a low 1,000 to 3,000 yuan a month.

Most of the openings are in sales or logistics.



# Handsome hobo needs mental help, cigarettes

By Wang Yu

The prince of the paupers, a poor man living on the street of Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, caught the attention of netizens as much for his looks as for his story.

Since early February, photos of "brother sharp" have been circulating online. He wears a dirty blue, cotton-padded coat with pants of a similar color.

His body looks plump because it is buried under every piece of clothing he has and his hair is a nest of grime; every detail screams he is a man of the streets and has been for some time.

However his handsome face – especially when taking a drag of his cigarette – made him an online celebrity and "fashion" icon. Many were eager to know where he came from. In several photos he is seen wearing a women's dress and holding a parasol – a look that took even Taiwan and Japan's netizens by surprise.

The cynics said "brother sharp" is yet another entry in a string of people seeking Internet fame.

However, Tu, the amateur photographer who took the pictures, denied these accusations. His pictures were taken January 30 at Tianyi Square in Ningbo when he just bought a new lens for his camera.

"I was testing the new lens when I saw him walking toward me. He was actually really different – not in his outfit but in the expression on his face. I posted the photos on a photography forum," Tu said.

However it was not until his sister sent him the link to a post with his photos that Tu realized they were so popular. Another netizen calling himself "gluttonous cat" told the backstory of "brother sharp."

"I don't think he is a beggar because those people beg for a living. He doesn't beg because he has mental problems. The first time I met him was in 2008. He told me that he was hungry and I gave him 10 yuan to buy some food. But this man used the money to buy a pack of cigarettes. He said he can find food in the garbage," he said.



Brother sharp never wanted to be a "fashion icon" or Internet celebrity.

Photo provided by Mop.com

The netizen also posted other photos of brother sharp scrounging the streets for food and sourcing new ladies' wear from the trash. Many in Ningbo began a campaign to track the man down with food and cigarettes.

"I know netizens have good intentions, but I would rather they leave him in peace. He is just a poor man with mental problems. If you run into him, just give him some food. There are still a lot of people like him. I hope these photos can be

used to call on society to help these people instead of raising up this one guy as a celebrity," Tu said.

On Monday, the government of Ningbo announced it would try to help brother sharp.

Two days later, he was found by a local relief station. However, he was frightened and refused help. He cried when "gluttonous cat," whom he spoke to several times in the past, tried to talk to him. Regulations prevent the forced relocation of an individual

to a relief shelter.

"Gluttonous cat" said that though people are eager to offer help, it will take time to fix the man's heart and persuade him to accept help. Online, people have begun to re-examine the hype.

Professor Liu Jitong, a sociologist from Peking University, said "brother sharp" is passive. Regardless of whether or not he has mental problems, no one has a right to pull him away from his chosen path in life.

## Guangzhou 'shows off' as Asian Games host at airport

By Huang Daohen

In eight months, billions of eyes will focus on Guangzhou, host of the 16th Asian Games. But the city decided to grab global attention early this Tuesday with a promotional campaign at Capital International Airport.

The campaign, "National Cultural Gateway, Asian Games Flavor," contains 116 exhibition boards and 200 photos spread along a 700-meter stretch between Terminals 1 and 2.

Airport passengers have had a chance to see preparation work for the Asian Games, including the Games' emblem and mascots, venues and a tentative schedule of competitions.

The display will be up through March 22, the Games' organizing committee said.

"Beijing Capital International Airport serves as the aviation gateway of China and more importantly as a window for international communication," said Xu Ruisheng, vice mayor of Guangzhou and executive deputy secretary-general of the Guangzhou Organizing Committee.

Xu hopes the display can tap into international traffic.

"In the wake of the Beijing Olympic Games, public expectations for the Guangzhou Asian Games are higher, which is a challenge," Xu said. "We need to differentiate the Asian Games from the Beijing 2008 [Olympics] to arouse interest."

Winning the bid to host the Asian Games, the second largest sporting event in the world after the Olympics, has changed the landscape of the city. Many massive constructions are underway.

The games will require 70 venues and training centers. Some are being renovated and upgraded, and 12 are being built, the committee said.

To make access smooth, Guangzhou has built new subway lines: 80 percent of the stadiums are served by trains.

"The Guangzhou Asian Games will help drive the development of Guangzhou and will bring new opportunities and vigor to the economy," Xu said.

The city invested an estimated 200 billion yuan into the many projects that are part of the Asian Games, including a new train terminal and fast lanes on its highways.

The 16th Asian Games will run from November 12 to 27 in Guangzhou.

## Chengdu named 'City of Gastronomy' by UNESCO, world's 2nd

By Liang Meilan

Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province, was named part of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network and awarded the title UNESCO City of Gastronomy, the world's second city of gastronomy and Asia's first.

On February 10, Director General of UNESCO Irina Bokova, on behalf of the organization, sent Chengdu's mayor Ge Honglin a letter confirming Chengdu's inclusion in the Creative Cities Network and its designation as a City of Gastronomy.

A total 21 cities have been designated members of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network, a project under the patronage of UNESCO

to celebrate and maintain cultural diversity. The list includes two other Chinese cities: Shenzhen and Shanghai, both Cities of Design.

The project focuses on excellent local products and ways to keep them relevant to city life, the local economy and social development. Each city is designated one field of excellence: literature, film, music, craft and folk art, design, media arts or gastronomy.

"Chengdu, birthplace of the world-renowned spicy Sichuan cuisine, will continue to bring creative innovation to its menus," Hua Jian, chef consultant responsible for the application, said. "Chengdu's culinary tradition is

well preserved but has been industrialized in creative ways.

"Chengdu was accepted into the network because of its 27 comprehensive creative projects involving cuisine, production of raw materials, culinary art and the launch of its delicacy museum," Hua said.

The title will stick for two years. After that, Chengdu will be required to pass a stricter assessment by experts appointed by UNESCO to evaluate whether the city will still deserve its designation, Hua said.

"The significance of Chengdu's entry into the alliance of creative cities is twofold. Domestically, it stimulates the creative industries

in Chengdu and other cities; on the international level, China gets to be a model for other developing countries," Hua said. "The creative industry is relatively weak among developing countries. Africa's export revenue accounts for 1 percent of the world total; China alone accounts for 19 percent."

Wang Zhonglin, deputy mayor of Chengdu, said the municipal government is starting a global alliance campaign for fine cuisine with an exhibition in Paris and other exhibitions to continue throughout the year.

Popayan, Colombia, was the first city designated a City of Gastronomy by UNESCO in 2005.

# Behind the vanishing migrants

## Young generation of peasants choose to stay home amid labor crisis

By Huang Daohen

It should be an optimistic sign: China has yet another labor shortage while the West battles serious unemployment for another year.

The government's latest statistics show there could be a gap of more than 2 million workers in the Pearl River Delta this year.

But for a country with the world's largest population, a labor shortage is baffling. Is there really a shortage of migrant workers? If so, where have the former jobless peasants gone, and why are they reluctant to return?



Menial labor jobs are facing a shortage of willing workers.

AP Photo

### Labor crisis returns

Half a year ago, Yang Jiaxing worried about the jeans piling up on his warehouse floor. Customers were few.

But business has picked up and Yang has a new problem: he is short on workers.

Yang, 38, runs a blue jeans factory in Wenzhou, a Zhejiang Province boom city known for its shoes. Work has been busy since the Chinese New Year holiday, and not just because of the orders.

The employer spends his morning at the city's street employment fair.

"I've been out there since the third day after the Lunar New Year, but haven't found enough workers," Yang said.

At the fair, as many as 40 other factory owners joined Yang. They posted recruitment notices on a chalkboard already home to a long list of openings.

For the factory owners, the shortage was a surprise. At the end of 2008, millions of migrant workers were sacked to stay profitable during the global economic downturn.

"Previously, a migrant worker would come back after the holiday and bring some of his fellow villagers who were looking for work," Yang said. "Now it seems it is not the companies choosing workers, but the workers choosing companies," he said.

The labor shortage is another sign the economy is bouncing back. Yang said his business started improving last August when buyers from home and abroad began placing orders.

His factory – a relatively small one with 30 workers last year – now needs 50 people, he said.

"We have no choice but to increase the pay to 2,500 yuan per month up from 2,000 yuan per worker, plus the pay for social insurance worth 400 yuan," he said.

Yang's efforts paid off. As of press time he has found more than enough workers.

His peers have not been so lucky. According to the city's statistics bureau, Wenzhou may be short 800,000 workers this year, and 52 percent of employers have reported having a hard time remaining staffed.

But enterprises in the Pearl River Delta, the world's factory, are facing more severe challenges.

In Guangdong, Dongguan and Shenzhen, the worker shortage may climb to 2 million, data from the



A migrant worker stands before a poster board in Guangzhou. This year, the industrial heartland is struggling to fill its factories.

CFP Photo

Guangzhou Human Resources and Social Security Bureau projects.

### Young generation's changing view

But where have the jobless farmers-turned workers gone?

The answer, according to a recent online survey by msnynet.com, is simple: home.

The first generation of migrant workers, born in the 1960s and 1970s, is returning home to care for their aging parents and to retire. The younger generation of migrant workers is increasingly seeking work at home.

"For the first generation, buying a house in cities like Beijing and Shanghai with soaring housing prices is out of question, thus why the younger generation is staying home," Zhao Xiao, a professor at the University of Science and Technology, said.

For the younger generation, born in the 1980s or 1990s, Zhao said they have a different world view. "They are choosier about their jobs," he said.

"Salary may be a key factor, but it is not the only thing that matters," Zhao said.

In Wenzhou, Li Ruide, 23, a migrant worker from Sichuan Province who now works in Yang's jeans factory, is an example.

Li, who earns 2,500 yuan per month, said salaries are not as attractive as they were in the past, as saving money is difficult in the big city.

The young man with spiky hair, brown slacks and sandals said he noticed a change in attitude among many of his fellow workers. After Chinese New Year, many of his friends left Wenzhou and did not return.

"Many of my friends found new

opportunities at home when they went back for Spring Festival," he said. "They decided to stay there."

Li was different: he left town to broaden his horizon. "After a few years, I may return to my hometown, and maybe start my own business like the people in Wenzhou," he said.

The young generation is also different from their parents: most are better educated and unwilling to settle for simple, repetitive work, Zhao said.

"Many are becoming unwilling to leave their hometowns because the salaries are lower than expected, and the work environments don't measure up to their standards," he said.

While their parents are gradually returning home, the younger generation are under much less pressure to support themselves.

### Behind the labor shortage

However, experts say the change in migrant worker attitudes alone cannot explain the phenomenon. The answer, Zhao said, lies in a combination of factors.

Structural problems in the labor market are a major reason, Zhao said. On the one hand, as the country's export industry crawls up the value chain, there is a severe shortage of skilled workers in fields like electronics manufacturing.

But on the other hand, some factories complain that lots of the younger migrant workers aren't interested in tough, basic jobs like construction.

Zhao said the current labor shortage in the Yangtze and Pearl River deltas may also be due to fast economic growth in secondary inland cities such as Chongqing, Wuhan and Nanchang.

"Many prefer these places because the salaries are almost on par with Beijing's and Shanghai's, and it's closer to their home."

But China should worry about the labor issue in the future, Zhao said. "As the one-child policy keeps accelerating the aging of the nation's labor pool, there will likely be a massive shortage in the coming decades," Zhao said.

"That future is one of our major dilemmas," he said.



# Answer sheet for 2010

## Two parliamentary sessions examine growth, living standards

Why is the international community so keen about China's parliamentary sessions which open this week? The answer is simple: China achieved remarkable economic growth in 2009, when most economies were still suffering from an economic downturn. This year, what kind of accomplishments will the government present to citizens?

### Growth, livelihood top concerns

The international community is watching out for new policies and far-reaching decisions by the

government during the legislative sessions, when the members are expected to discuss measures to boost the economy.

Foreign media and think tanks, such as Japan's *The Choice* magazine, have said that although the Chinese economy has seen an extraordinary recovery, the country is still facing

serious challenges, including trade disputes and inflation.

Observers are curious to see how China will resolve such challenges and whether it will continue to be the engine of world economic growth.

New plans to improve living standards are another point of interest. In recent years, the government has attached greater importance to raising living standards and enacting related reforms and policies.

In a commentary, the Singapore newspaper *Lianhe Zaobao* said the Chinese government attaches importance to improving people's living standards, and that this year will be better than the last.

### Corruption under the spotlight

China's efforts in fighting corruption have also drawn global attention.

*Lianhe Zaobao*



IC Photo

### Voice

## Say goodbye to 'smilence'

If you can ever find a word to describe what most members of the CPPCC do at the sessions, it must be something creatively Chinese.

"Smilence" is the word – a portmanteau of "smile" and "silence," which was coined by netizens to describe a majority of lawmakers' default expression or response to their colleagues' actions.

The *cnr.cn* website cited observers saying that two-thirds of the members of the National Committee of the CPPCC never raise any proposals and more than 10 percent never speak.

"In the year of general

elections, the sum of ballot tickets returned would be two to three less than those handed out," Zhao Yongqiu, a member of the National Committee of the CPPCC, said.

Some members think their role is just an honorary title; some do not know what to do at the sessions or how to make a proposal, the website said.

But the "smilence" phenomenon has decreased in recent years, the site said.

As this year's sessions begin, let us hope the members do more than sit in smilence. They should do what is expected of them as lawmakers. (Agencies)

said facts have proven the Chinese leadership's determination to wipe out corruption and that the international community has spoken highly of its anti-corruption drive.

Foreign experts regard the annual legislative sessions as a vital window into China's social and economic development. They also see new policies as playing a significant role in shaping China's development

and thus influencing the world, especially since the global economy has not yet stabilized and developed countries have yet to come out of the economic downturn.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), once said that beyond all doubt, China would continue to play a vital role in boosting international and regional economic recovery. (Agencies)

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# Toyota clings to China in post-recall damage control

## Top market for recovery

"The China market is very important to Toyota, so I decided to fly here directly from the US to deliver my expression of apology and an explanation to Chinese consumers in the hopes of regaining trust," Toyota said at the press conference.

"Except for the RAV4, all other models sold in China are free of accelerator or brake problems," he said.

"The apology to Chinese consumers is significant as it acknowledges the importance of the China market, which has become key to automakers as they struggle with weak global sales," Liu Deqian, an analyst from the Institute of Finance and Trade Economics at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said.

Given the possible short-term setbacks the recall will have in the North American market, the China market is even more important to Toyota, he said.

## A 'sorry' to stabilize

Toyota's recall crisis damaged consumer confidence in the brand.

Liu said the main purpose for Toyota's China tour was to stabilize

the market in China, as the recall casts a shadow of uncertainty over its future US sales.

Last year, Toyota sales fell 21 percent in the US. During the same time, sales in China totaled 709,000 units, a growth rate of 21 percent.

According to a survey conducted by Sina.com's auto channel, 74 percent of respondents had heard about the recall: two-thirds of them said the incident damaged their confidence in the brand.

Bao Shuangjian, a Beijing Corolla owner, said "although my car is not on the recall list, I thought it was sheer luck. I am still worried I may run into trouble when driving one day."

The Corolla was his first Toyota purchase, in 2006. "I was always thinking about upgrading to a Camry or Reiz. Now I'm having second thoughts and am looking to German brands. Safety should always be the top concern for drivers," he said.

Toyota's Corolla, Camry and Reiz were its top three sellers in China last year.

Toyota authorities will be visiting distributors and buyers in 35 cities to try and reduce the effects of the recall, Liu Peng, Toyota China's spokesman, said.

## 2010 goals unchanged

The auto market is expected to thaw this month as the country moves into

## By Chu Meng

Japanese carmaker Toyota is clinging desperately to China as it weathers a global recall that has sullied the automaker's name.

Akio Toyoda, president and CEO of Toyota Motor Corporation and grandson of its founder, spoke at a press conference in Beijing on Monday evening to reiterate promises of quality and safety.

At least 75,500 RAV4 models produced at FAW-Toyota in Tianjin are being recalled because of defective brake pedals.

The national quality watchdog urged the drivers of Toyotas made abroad to contact an authorized service center.

the heart of Spring. Toyota sales in China will be affected if the company fails to handle the recall.

"The company still hopes to sell more than 800,000 vehicles in China this year. Toyota has not introduced its full product lines into China, which means there is a lot of room for growth," Liu said.

But sales were already faltering last month, when the auto giant sold 45,400 cars - 16 percent fewer than it did in January.

"It is obvious that negative news about Toyota's recent recalls in the US has kept visitors out of our showrooms. The ones who did come in expressed doubts over whether the Toyota cars we are selling would have the same or other quality issues in future," Xing Hui, a salesman at the local FAW-Toyota's 4S (sales, service, spare parts, survey) store said.

"If Toyota can take action to stop these problems in China on time, it won't face the challenges it does in the US. Chinese consumers are more sensitive to price and oil consumption than they are to brand image," Xing said.

## No compensation in China

While American buyers were given the royal treatment, Chinese RAV4 buyers were only given free maintenance to replace the recalled parts.

Many angry customers said they were thinking of taking legal action against Toyota China.

Toyota offered home-service and a loaner car to its affected buyers in the US; those who drove to a Toyota dealership by themselves were paid for their mileage.

Currently, Toyota has 33 stores in Beijing and many independent dealers in the city sell Toyotas. Xing Hui said the parts that need to be replaced on RAV4s are now in local Toyota outlets, and customers can have the gas pedal replaced for free.

"I don't just want free parts. I expect reasonable compensation to show how sorry Toyota feels to its Chinese customers," an RAV4 owner at Guangtong Toyota 4S Store surname Su said.



Akio Toyoda apologizes to Chinese Toyota owners for its recalls. Photo by Allan Wang

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# Value of a life

## Traffic accident involving foreigner starts debate about compensation

By Zhang Dongya

A Chinese-Singaporean man died in a car accident in Hunan Province last year. The victim's parents were not satisfied with the compensation the court awarded and have appealed the decision, saying that as Chinese Singaporeans they should get more.

The case has generated some tough questions: Is the life of a foreigner worth more than a Chinese person's? How do you put a price on life and bereavement?



A German man died in a car crash in Beijing last November. As the number of foreigners working and living in China surges, the compensation for accidents involving them comes under the spotlight.

CFP Photo

On March 9, 2009, a Chinese-Singaporean man named Chen Rui, in his 30s, was slain in a car accident in Hengdong County, Hunan Province. Because of limited visibility due to fog, a construction vehicle rammed into a concrete mixer, which toppled the bus Chen was riding. The bus crashed into a truck, resulting in a pileup. Chen died immediately and four other bus passengers were injured.

An investigation by the Hunan Public Security Bureau found the driver of the construction vehicle, Zhang Weihua, and the driver of Chen's bus, Zhao Zongguang,

responsible for the accident. The men were ordered to pay the victims' compensation.

In April, Chen's parents filed a suit with the local court, the People's Court in Hengdong County. The case was heard in September.

The couple asked for a compensation of 4 million yuan from the defendants. They claimed they had devoted their lives and all their money to Chen, their only child who was born in China, educated in Singapore and later became a citizen of the city-state, and that his death left them with insufferable pain.

Lawyers for the two defendants and the insurance company rejected the demand, saying it did not have any legal basis.

The court announced its verdict at the end of 2009: the defendants were ordered to pay Chen's family 799,855 yuan and the four injured passengers between 200,000 and 500,000 yuan each.

The court said the accident not only brought pain to Chen's family, but also resulted in a big loss to the local economy. Since a foreigner was involved, the court adopted a special compensation standard owing to differences in

national economies. But in consideration of the defendants' financial situation, it rejected the Chen family's larger demand.

The 799,855-yuan sum was determined based on a 1992 regulation that stipulated damages to be awarded to foreigners who encounter "personal injury at sea." The regulation put the maximum allowable compensation at 800,000 yuan.

The verdict generated discussions about the disparity between the "price" of a foreigner's life and a local's, with many calling the decision unfair.

Since the accident occurred in

China, many people say the compensation should have been calculated based solely on Chinese laws and regulations.

Since the accident happened on land and not on sea, some law experts say the court based its ruling on a wrong regulation, describing them as two "different circumstances."

A lawyer for the plaintiff, the Chens, presents a different viewpoint. If a foreigner receives compensation based on the Chinese cost of living and he lives in a more developed country, will the money go the same distance? Can this situation be described as "fair"?

### Comment

#### Different factors should be considered

Calculations of compensation in an accident should be based on local regulations even if a foreigner is involved. Compensation could be calculated having considered varying factors among people: social background, income, cost of

living. Chen lived in Singapore not China, which meant a higher living expense. Therefore the compensation for Chen's death should be higher, but the court needs to give reasonable justifications.

— Xiao Yongping, dean of the law school at Wuhan University

#### Life is priceless

Life is priceless; compensation for the lost income of the deceased is not a measure of his life.

— Fu Daqing, lawyer at Jing-sheng Law Firm in Chongqing

#### Weigh fairness and justice

It is important for a court to weigh fairness and justice. Too

much money might help console the victim's family, but the defendants also have the right to survive financially. In Chen's case, 4 million yuan would definitely put the defendants in despair.

— Wang Jing, editor of a law magazine

#### Buy insurance just in case

I suggest buying insurance

when travelling abroad, especially to developing countries. Usually local courts are in charge of accidents or tort cases that occur in their areas of jurisdiction, but people can also ask for help from their embassy or consulate.

— Chen Jiankang, lawyer at Z&Z Law Firm in Chongqing

# Heroine for the homeless

## German teen helps promote welfare of stray cats

By Zhao Hongyi

Eighteen-year-old Charlotte Landwehr has cared for dozens of homeless cats since she discovered their plight five years ago. She is also actively involved in finding them a permanent home and in teaching urbanites how to co-exist.

### The magic whistle

In her home in a Sanlitun compound, 18-year-old Charlotte Landwehr whistles and cats immediately dash out from various directions to nestle at her feet.

"Only her whistle works, no one else's does," says her father Andreas, who works as a correspondent for the German news agency Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA).

Charlotte brings out food and pours water into small bowls. The cats know it's dinner time.

This has been a daily routine for the German girl the past five years – ever since she read an article online about the rising number of stray cats in Beijing, and how some end up tortured for perverse fun or served on a plate.

At 13, she knew she had to do something. "At the beginning, I only fed the cats occasionally," Charlotte says. "But I soon found that they liked to cuddle up to me though they were always timid."

She decided to provide a home to some of them: Tiger, Pauly, Charlie, Toby and Melody.

### Famous in the expat community

The New Zealand Embassy once called Charlotte after staff members discovered two stray cats wandering the embassy compound. Charlotte and her friends went to the embassy right away, trapped the cats and took them home.

In the past five years, Charlotte has saved 14 strays, including those she adopted. "I have one cat at home that is losing her fur," she says. "I don't know why – either she is too old or has a disease – but I know she needs my care."

Unlike most teenage girls who splurge on music CDs, clothes and makeup, Charlotte spends her allowance on cat food.

She also regularly receives donations of 30 to 50 yuan from members of the

diplomatic community who know of her advocacy. Charlotte is grateful for the money, but says what she has is far short of what she needs: she has to have the animals neutered and the sick ones require surgery.

She has so far spent nearly 10,000 yuan. "We'll continue to support her work as long as she is doing it," Andreas says.

### From child to young adulthood

Charlotte came to Beijing at age 1, when her father was assigned here in 1993.

She attended primary school at the German International School and high school at the Western Academy of Beijing, but considers herself deeply connected to the city.

She has loved animals since she was a young girl. Besides homeless cats, she has taken care of dogs, birds, rabbits and tortoises.

Now she spends her mornings in school and her afternoons or evenings and weekends taking care of the cats.

While most children outgrow their fascination with animals at puberty, Charlotte's is looking like a long-term thing. She got an internship at a local pet clinic a few years ago and has since become an expert in cat care and treatment.

### Solution to huge stray population

A cat can give birth four times a year and can have as many as six kittens with each litter. The population of stray cats has spiked in recent years and the only solution, Charlotte says, "is to neuter and spay them."

Charlotte is advocating the Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) method to control the population of stray animals. This involves catching them using spacious and humane traps, neutering them and finally returning them to their original habitat.



Stray cats are the companions of Charlotte in her spare time.

Photo by Zhao Hongyi



Charlotte's website has a list of stray cats for adoption.

Photos provided by charlyscats.org

She has joined a number of pet clinics in a campaign to raise money for more sterilization procedures, and has so far helped neuter and spay 10 cats. She says a small part of their ear is docked to indicate they have already received the operation.

She and animal welfare advocates are also encouraging local residents to adopt homeless cats, as well as conducting education campaigns about how to humanely deal with strays.

"Most cats are abandoned by irresponsible owners," Charlotte says, adding that cats are easy pets if their owners have even basic knowledge about animal care.

To encourage more cat adoptions, the teen started a website, charlyscats.org. On it, she has a list of cats waiting for loving homes. She also has ads seeking more volunteers and donations.

Her work has been featured in various international and local media, including *Germany-Radio*, *Germany TV Station* and *Global Times*.

### Protection work continues

But Charlotte says there is more to be done. Last year, she wrote a school thesis, "Stray Cats in Beijing", discussing the reasons for the increase in the ani-

mals' population and offering solutions to the problem.

The study says there is an estimated half a million stray cats in Beijing that spread deadly disease.

In 2003, cats were identified as one of the main sources of the H1N1 virus and thus became targets for elimination. Some residents trapped and killed strays, while others served them for dinner.

"Don't kill them and don't eat them," Charlotte pleaded. "Have them neutered, which is a simple procedure. And give them food, take care of them."

Her father will soon finish his contract in Beijing so the Landwehrs will return to Germany, where Charlotte will attend university. But she is adamant that the work of caring for homeless animals continue.

She is hopeful about their prospects, particularly after learning that a group of Chinese scholars is drafting an animal-welfare law, which will provide better care for strays.

### Charlotte's contact information

Website: Charlyscats.org  
Email: charlybj@gmail.com



# Chilean embassy starts Chinese blog after killer quake

By Annie Wei

The Chilean Embassy launched a Chinese blog to provide the latest news and information on rescue and relief efforts after a magnitude 8.8 quake hit the country last Saturday and killed at least 720 people.

The embassy said the Chilean government also hopes the blog on ifeng.com will put it in closer contact with Chinese netizens. Ifeng was the first Chinese online media to offer its services to the embassy after the quake, one of the strongest tremors ever recorded, hit south and central Chile.

The blog, which was started February 28, had only about a dozen brief updates as of Thursday, but had already attracted 50,000 visitors. It also contained more than a hundred comments, including expressions of condolences and support from Chinese citizens.

On Monday, a new post described Chilean President Michelle Bachelet's call for aid and included a bank account number for donations.

Chile produces a third of the world's copper and many wondered how the quake would affect the global copper industry. A blog entry posted on Tuesday said the production of Chile's copper mines is back to normal.

Despite a huge international aid mobilization, tens of thousands of Chileans affected by the quake remain with little or no food, water and shelter, and



Soldiers guard the streets in the fishing village of Constitucion, central Chile, where more than 300 bodies have been found.

IC Photo

reports of looting and lawlessness continue.

Hours after the quake struck, President Hu Jintao sent his condolences to Bachelet on behalf of the nation, saying China was ready to help quake victims and that he was confident the Chilean government would weather the

disaster and successfully rebuild.

Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi also contacted his Chilean counterpart Mariano Fernandez to express sympathy.

There has been no report of Chinese nationals who perished in the quake, according to the foreign ministry.

## Information for donors

Account name: Embassy of Chile  
Bank: China CITIC Bank H. O. General Banking, Beijing  
Dollar Account No: 7110111482500050695  
RMB Account No: 7110110182500003470  
Bank Address: 19 Jian Guomen Wai Dajie, Beijing  
SWIFT Code: CIBKCNBJ100

## Israeli drama discusses fragile female bonds

By Li Zhixin

The Israeli Embassy presented the popular Israeli play *Best Friends* at the Chaoyang 9 Theater last Friday as part of a cultural exchange program between the country and China.

The play, which examines the fragile relationship among female friends, provides entertainment while examining a thought-provoking social phenomenon. The story follows three women – Sofi, Tirza and Lali – from their first pivotal bonding experience in the girls' toilets at school by sharing illicit cigarettes passed below the cubicle doors to later in life when a rift develops between the friends.

"I'd been thinking about why friendships and emotional bonds cannot survive when differences in lifestyles and varying degrees of success and financial gain enter the picture," said Anat Gov, the playwright, who flew to Beijing for the show.

"It is all driven by jealousy ... It is important to be happy for your friend even though you're not happy with your life," she said. "It is easy to be with someone who is in trouble, but it is difficult to be happy for another person who is better than you are."



Anat Gov (second from left) with the play's actresses. Photo by Li Zhixin

The drama, written in 1999, is based on Gov's personal experience. It was a huge success in Israel and has been staged 700 times in the past decade, said Edna Mazza, the director of *Best Friend's* Israeli edition, who also attended the Beijing performance.

The most interesting part of the play occurs when Gov exposes friendship as merely a series of coincidences and a shared history, said Wu Zhuhong, who translated, adapted and directed the piece for the local audience.

"This does not make (the friend-

ship) any less valuable, but allows her to observe it pragmatically, away from the mesh of human emotions and reactions, which more generally negates any real insight into the true structure and flux of relationships," she said.

Wu Yanwei, an audience member, said the play reveals important aspects of humanity. "Although it is an Israeli story, humanity is not dictated by where you were born. I think women value friendship, especially in school, but envy and vanity can easily ruin their friendships."

## Beijing welcomes first Francophonie foreign film festival

By Han Manman

The inaugural Francophonie Film Festival, which runs through March 30, offers movie lovers a smorgasbord of foreign films.

The festival, organized by Art Genesis with the support of the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF), presents 30 films from countries such as France, Senegal, Switzerland, Quebec, Serbia, Vietnam and Belgium.

Among them are Austrian director Florian Flicker's comedy *Hold Up*, *Sticky Fingers*, another comedy by Canada's Ken Scott, and *Vertige*, a drama by Chuyen Bui Thac of Vietnam.

The films are being screened at the French Cultural Center and the Canadian International School Beijing (CISB) in their original language, with Chinese subtitles. Some of the films also contain French or English subtitles.

All screenings are free and on a first-come-first-seated basis.

"We're very happy to promote films from far away countries," Christine Pernin, general director of Art Genesis, said. "Some of these films are very recent while

others are cult movies in their native countries. All will prove very interesting to the Beijing audience."

A delegation of foreign directors and actors will be coming to town to introduce their movies and to conduct master classes. They include directors Ferid Boughedir from Tunisia (*A Summer in La Goulette*), Stephane Aubier and Vincent Patar from Belgium (*A Town Called Panic*) and Mansour Sora Wade from Senegal (*The Price of Forgiveness*).

The OIF is an organization of French-speaking countries and consists of more than 56 members and 14 observer countries, encompassing a population of 870 million people.

### French Cultural Center

Where: 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6553 2627

Web: ccfpekin.org

### Canadian International School Beijing (CISB)

Where: 38 Liangmaqiao Lu,

Chaoyang District

Tel: 6465 7788

Web: cisb.com.cn

# Alumni associations hold animal welfare fundraiser

By Annie Wei

The Columbia Alumni Association of Beijing is sponsoring on March 20 the Animal Welfare Fundraising Dinner to promote control the city's stray-cat population.

The event will feature three speakers from the International Center for Veterinary Services (ICVS), who will talk about Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) as a viable, inexpensive and humane way of controlling the number of stray cats.

Mary Peng, an ICVS founder and one of the speakers, said proceeds from the event will go toward promoting TNR in local communities. She said ICVS is not asking people to conduct TNR themselves but encouraging them to come to the center to learn more about proper pet care.

Despite stories about volunteers catching stray cats for neutering, the population of the animals has actually increased, Peng said. One of the reasons is the abandonment of pets by irresponsible owners who lack experience with handling animal diseases.

"Some local clinics may not be able to properly diagnose a disease and suggest that the pet owner abandon the animal," she said.

Participants at the fundraiser include alumni of other US and UK universities like Brown, Cambridge, Cornell, Dartmouth, Georgetown, MIT, Oxford, University of Pennsylvania and Yale.

"There are many Chinese alumni in Beijing and they can help disseminate information about responsible pet ownership to local communities," Peng said.

Erika Helms, a Columbia University alumnus, said organizers expect at least a hundred people to attend the dinner. "Everyone living in Beijing sees the pitiful stray cats and dogs around, and I think a lot of people want to help them but do not know the best ways," she said.

Helms said she believes the talks will spark an interesting debate, because many of the alumni have varying opinions



Mary Peng (third from left), one of the speakers at the coming Columbia Alumni event, with her colleagues at ICVS

about whether animal welfare practices overseas, such as the neutering of stray animals, can become widespread in China.

Frank Fan, another ICVS founder, said consciousness about animal welfare is in its infancy in China and the local situation is complicated by inexperienced animal-shelter staff and murky government regulations.

Since its establishment in January 2006, the ICVS has been providing animal health care and

giving information on responsible pet ownership to pet owners and local communities.

## Animal Welfare Fundraising Dinner

Where: Jinmao Ballroom, Westin Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 20, 5-8 pm  
Tel: 8456 1939/40/41 (ICVS)  
Cost: 300 yuan (reserve by

March 10 at  
nik2001@caa.columbia.edu)  
Web: ICVSASIA.com



Abandoned dogs are a common sight in the city.

Photos by Chris Gelken and Shirley Han Ying

## Where to get your ticket

1) Roots & Shoots Beijing Office, Room 1309, Beijing City International School (BCIS), 77 Baizhuan Nan Er Lu, Chaoyang District

Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 am - 5:30 pm  
Tel: 6778 3115

2) Poalim Asia Direct, 1806CBD Oriental Media Center, Tower A, 4 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District

Hours: Monday - Friday, 10 am - 5:30 pm  
Tel: 6581 8018

3) Suite 1106, Tower C, Grand Pacific Building, 8A Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District

Hours: Monday - Friday, 10 am - 6 pm,  
Tel: 6583 2581

4) Room 601 Wenjin International Apartments, Building 5, Zhongguangcun Dong Lu, Haidian District

Hours: Monday - Friday, 11 am - 5 pm  
Tel: 6257 4413

5) If you live near CBD/Ritan Park/The Place, contact: David at 134 0112 8662

6) If you live near Peking University, Haidian District, contact Derrick at 132 4141 6179

## Event

### Chartreuse Party

Celebrate the magic of the world's oldest known liqueur, chartreuse, at Bed Bar, a hutong bar near the Drum and Bell Tower. Chartreuse has been produced for 400 years by Chartreux monks in France using 130 types of plants, roots and flowers.

Where: Bed Bar, 17 Zhangwang Hutong, Jiu Gulou Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: March 5, 9 pm

Tel: 13501281393

Cost: 40 yuan for chartreuse cocktail, 20 per shot

### Adam Williams' Book of the Alchemist

The Yin Yang Community Center, which features a cafe and a personal development library, presents Beijing-based novelist Adam Williams who will discuss his latest work, *Book of the Alchemist*, about life in war-torn Andalusia. Williams, whose family has lived in China going back to the 1890s, has written three books about the country.

Where: The Yin Yang Community Center, Courtyard 1, Hegezhuang Village, Cuigezhuang Township, Shunyi District

When: March 6, 4 pm

Tel: 6431 2108

Cost: 50 yuan

### Wingchun kung fu with Marco Lee

Kung fu master Marco Lee will be at The Hutong to give lessons on Wingchun kung fu, a martial art popularized by the late action star Bruce Lee. The class will cover self-defense and martial art skills, and is only for adults.

Where: The Hutong, Jiudaowan Zhongxiang Hutong (south of Dongzhimen Nei Dajie), Dongcheng District

When: March 6, 4-6 pm

Tel: 15901046127

Cost: 200 yuan

### Chinese folk art class for children

One of the best tools to help improve children's sense of aesthetics, creativity and emotional quotient is art. The Neighborhood Chinese Language and Culture Center is hosting a variety of art classes for children ages 5 to 13. Topics include Chinese painting, simplified drawing, paper cutting and sculpture.

Where: Neighborhood Chinese Language and Culture Center, Room 1-1503, Building 429, Wangjing Xi Yuan, Chaoyang District

When: March 6,

9:30-11:30 am

Tel: 8450 1789

Cost: 240 yuan

(By Liang Meilan)

## Bohai Bike challenge in spring

By Annie Wei

The Schoolhouse and The China Charity Challenge are hosting their first charity bike ride, Bohai or Bust, in Huairou District on April 3. Participants can choose among 12 routes, ranging from a family-friendly path to a 66-kilometer ride through Bohai Township.

Proceeds will go to the Mutianyu Village Charity Fund, which last year was used to sponsor a dinner and provide gift packages for elderly residents.

Morgan O'Hara, one of the event organizers, said that the

elderly in rural communities need more attention and support. He said there are many fund-raising events for children and other causes, but there is less concern toward the elderly, thus their idea for a charity bike ride.

The registration fee is 100 yuan for adult riders and 50 yuan for children under age 13. Each participant will receive a *Biking Bohai* book and a free T-shirt. Note that this is a bring-your-own-bike event.

For more information, visit bohaiorbust.org.



Volunteers performing for Mutianyu elders

Photo provided by Margon O'Hara



# Curling becomes popular after Vancouver Olympics

By Chu Meng

Curling, previously a little-known game in China, has gained popularity in Beijing after the Vancouver Winter Olympics, due mostly to the unexpected wins by the Chinese national curling team.

"There have been at least 20 calls from locals asking us how to join our club," Li Xin, coach of the Beijing Zilongxiang Curling Club, said, adding that this was a welcome development since the group had gotten only a few calls a month since its establishment in 1998. "And most of them were foreigners, such as Canadians living in town."

Li, 33, discovered curling as a student at the University of Vancouver in the 90s. He joined a curling club on campus and has been in love with the sport ever since.

Before the Vancouver Games, held February 12 to 28, few Chinese people knew about the game, Li said. China has only 100 professional athletes involved in curling compared to Canada's 1 million registered players, he said.

"And there are just three stadiums equipped to host professional curling competitions: one in Harbin and two in Beijing. We are the first and the only curling club in downtown Beijing open to the public. The other one is in the outskirts, in Huairou District, used for the national team's training."

Yang Cheng, the club's assistant coach, said curling is a sport that actually suits Asians' physique since it emphasizes skill rather than physical strength and involves limited body contact among players.

He found out about Zilongxiang club through an article in the *Beijing Youth Daily* in 1998, and developed a fascination for the sport after watching several games involving the Chinese national team. "I liked the wonderful feeling of sliding, although I didn't know much about curling at the time. After I played it,



Focus and precision are key to the game.

Photos provided by Beijing Zilongxiang Curling Club



Beijing Zilongxiang is the only place to play curling downtown.

I felt pretty cool. I'm addicted to it now," he said.

Yang said curling's development in China has been impeded by a lack of facilities and the sport's expensive equipment. The stone must be made of polished natural granite from Scotland, and each curling set costs anywhere from 40,000 to 100,000 yuan. In addition, personal

equipment, such as brushes and shoes, costs several thousand yuan a set.

Chinese people still have a long way to go toward understanding the sport, said Yang.

"Most people still confuse curling with skating. They often ask me whether they can wear their skating shoes for curling. I tell them curling

and skating are two completely different kinds of sports. Curling shoes do not have blades; instead one foot is smooth and the other rougher."

To attract more players, Li and Yang imported professional curling equipment, including an ice-making machine, from Canada.

In exchange for a monthly membership fee of 200 yuan, Zilongxiang's members do not have to worry about curling facilities and equipment. The club provides free training each Tuesday and Thursday, and can also help members order shoes and sportswear from Canada.

## Beijing Zilongxiang Curling Club

Where: 200 meters west of Exit D of Hepingli Bei Jie station on Subway Line 5

Tel: 6429 1619

Cost: Venue costs 3,000 yuan for two hours; at least 10 players are needed

# China issues first license for partnership with foreign investors

By Han Mannan

China issued the first license for business partnership with a foreign investor Monday, officially allowing foreign investors to become involved in partnerships locally.

The Industrial and Commercial Administrative Department of Kunshan, Jiangsu Province, issued the pioneering license to the partnership Kunshan Sun City Gardening Center.

Now foreign investors can apply for business partnerships on condition that they comply with Chinese policies on foreign investment. Applications for foreign-invested partnerships will be processed within 20 days.

Under the new regulation, foreign investors wishing to establish partnerships in China only have to sign up with a business registration department and no longer have to seek the approval of commerce authorities.

The measure also applies to partnerships established on the mainland by companies or individuals from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

Experts said the new regulation will encourage foreign investors with advanced technology and management experience to set up joint ventures in China, which will promote the development of industries such as the service sector.

Selena She, a partner at Jade

& Fountain PRC Lawyers, said the measure heralds the start of a new investment pattern in China. She said that for a long time, foreign investments in China were governed by a different set of rules from their local counterparts, and that the Chinese government has been very cautious of legal development in this area.

She said the major types of permissible foreign investment – wholly foreign-owned enterprise, equity joint ventures and cooperative joint ventures – were introduced in the country back in the early 1980s. Since then, there have been no fundamental developments until the State Council approved the new regulation.

The law says that a foreign-invested partnership may be established solely by foreign enterprises and/or foreign individuals or between foreign investors and domestic entities or individuals.

"Although there are issues left for further clarification, we regard these measures as a laudable move by the Chinese government, which should push forward a more internationalized legal environment for foreign investments," She said.

"We believe the rapidly growing Chinese private equity and venture capital industry can particularly benefit from the measures – which will help attract more international industry leaders and ensure a healthy development here."

## ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

**I think the Beijing weather is responsible for the return of my migraine. I heard that acupuncture can help migraine sufferers. Can you recommend a good acupuncturist?**

Better see a doctor to get a more accurate diagnosis. Check out Beijing Zhongyi Hospital, which has a good acupuncture department with migraine experts. Call the hospital at 5217 6677 for more information.

**Where can I find a cosplay shop that offers Gothic lolita costumes for rent or sale?**

Try the 6th floor of Soshow Mall in Chongwenmen District, which has several Cosplay costume shops. They offer stuff ranging from wigs to dresses. You will easily find the mall once you exit Chongwenmen station on Subway Line 2 and 5.

**I've been rock climbing in Ritan Park for a while and I'm looking for a new venue. Any suggestions?**

Rock climbing is a popular sport among Beijingers, so you won't lack indoor and outdoor climbing options. Below are some places where members of rock climbing clubs train.

## Beijing Anzhen Bouldering Club

Where: 1/F, Building 1, Shenggujiayuan, Anzhenqiao, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 5165 0066

## The Beijing Capital Gymnasium Rock Climbing Center

Where: 54 Baishiqiao Lu, Haidian District  
Tel: 6833 5552

## National Olympic Sports and Recreation Center

Where: 1 Anding Lu, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 6491 2143

## Shencundao New Concept Travel Base

Where: 6 Hongluo Bei Lu, Huairou District  
Tel: 6068 1155

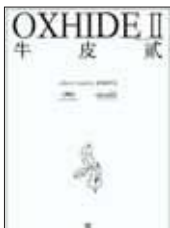
**I'm looking for a racquetball court. It doesn't particularly matter where, although Chaoyang would be nice.**

The Beijing Hilton Hotel Fitness Center has a large racquetball court. Call the hotel at 6466 2288 for booking cost and other details.

(By Liang Meilan)



Oxhide



Oxhide II

# Blurring drama

## Young filmmaker's new

By He Jianwei

It is fresh and peculiar to watch Liu Jiajin's films.

Oxhide, her two-hour feature, consists of 23 shots, was filmed in an apartment and stars her family – limited resources with which Liu shatters the boundaries of film.

When the film won the Caligari Film Award at the Berlin Film Festival in 2005, Liu started on *Oxhide II* to continue the family's story. It was selected for "Director's Fortnight" at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival.

While the films have been a hit at international film festivals, few Chinese viewers have had the chance to see them on the big screen. Last week, the Ullens Center (UCCA) for Contemporary Art presented Liu's two films to domestic viewers.

**"I can't explain why I wanted to make this film in such an 'extreme' way, but I knew this was our life and I just filmed it in a way that was fit: it was depressive and boring."**

**"All the technical problems were caused by poverty, and that was part of my film."**



**L**iu was only 23 when she made *Oxhide* in 2004, a story of a three-member family – father, mother and daughter – creating hand-made leather bags to scrape by.

When business declined, special discounts could have saved the shop from losing money. But the father felt it would be a blow to his pride.

Their hope of paying off debts incurred during that time would not be fulfilled for many years. The father ages, but clings to unrealistic hopes.

*Oxhide* was based on the real experiences of Liu's family, and all the scenes took place in the filmmaker's 50-square-meter home.

For Liu, the film was a chance to preserve family memories.

"From beginning to end, there was no other staff involved in making the film except my father, mother and me," Liu says. "I can't explain why I wanted to make this film in such an 'extreme' way, but I knew this was our life and I just filmed it in a way that was fit: it was depressive and boring."

This film was Liu's graduation project at the Beijing

Film Academy (BFA). She lucked out in getting actors to perform for the camera. "Unlike other films, they understood my career and were supportive. They knew me well," she says.

The first take was shot in March 2004, but was suspended after a fierce quarrel with her father. Two months later they resumed and finished it.

Although her parents were not professional actors, they cooperated tacitly. Most shots had only one take.

"We acted out our lives and showed the audience what we wanted. There was nothing else going on. The life we wanted was something artificial," she says.

Preparation for each shot began in the evening. The final take came early the next day. "During that time, my parents had to go to work and I was alone. It took us a lot of time to prepare for each day. I didn't hire anyone to help out," she says.

The final scenes shown to the audience were dark and dark. "Maybe it was not what they wanted, but it was my life. The lights in my house were never lived in a brighter place," she says.

A tight budget caused the sound to be quite

**"It was not a documentary: I made the script first and the actors rehearsed several times before shooting. Everything was under my control and I didn't let things happen at random."**



Liu Jiajin breaks the line between film and documentary in her two feature films made in an apartment and starring her family.



# na and documentary

## take on the movie



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even unclear at times. "I needed two microphones to record the sound on the spot, but I could not afford better quality. The bad sound is mostly from the cheap microphones I used," she says.

Liu was unwilling to make the picture lighter or adjust the sound. She decided to retain any and all flaws. "All the technical problems were caused by poverty, and that was part of my film," she says.

The film was so real that many viewers believed it was a documentary. Liu was invited to several documentary festivals. But her film deliberately blurred the lines between drama and documentary.

"It was not a documentary: I made the script first and the actors rehearsed several times before shooting. Everything was under my control and I didn't let things happen at random," she says.

But the divide between good drama and documentary is splitting hairs, she says.

"What is the thin line? It exists between two colors. You can't see it, but there is somehow still a division. For me, filmmaking is a way to explore those lines," she says.

*Oxhide* was screened at several international festi-

vals and received awards including the Golden DV Prize at the 29th Hong Kong International Film Festival, First Prize Dragons & Tigers Award in the 24th Vancouver International Film Festival, First Prize JJ-Star in the 6th Jeonju International Film Festival and best director at the International Contemporary Film Festival in Mexico.

Despite her success, it was five years before Liu made a sequel.

"*Oxhide* was not a low-cost movie. It was a movie that cost as little as possible. When I finished it and it was recognized by the viewers, I thought that might be a way to make a full-length film," she says.

As in *Oxhide*, the filmmaker and her parents play the three family members again: the only other actors are cats.

Against that backdrop, even a scene of making

dumplings serves to foreshadow doom.

To cope with these situations, each family member developed his own attitude. As the end nears, the parents worry whether or not they or their employees can find other jobs.

The second film consists of nine depicting tension in the family after they hear their shop's contract has been dissolved.

"Unlike *Oxhide*, the second film is not segments of their lives. I focused on one scene at a certain time. Space and time are more focused in *Oxhide II*. I'm fascinated with observing the continuous action happening in a certain time and place," she says.

Liu focuses on making dumplings because it is an important shared moment in Chinese families: it is the only time all members can get together and talk.

In the second film, her parents are more used to acting. "We are a family," Liu says. "But when they heard ["action" and] "stop," our relationship turned into one of actor and director. It was an efficient way to make the film."

After screening at international film festivals, *Oxhide II* won the Blue Chameleon Award and White Chameleon Award at the 3rd Cinema Digital Seoul Film Festival.

Liu teaches literature at BFA. She is planning to turn *Oxhide* into a trilogy, and hopes the third entry in her series can be filmed quicker than the second.



family.

Photos provided by UCCA

"What is the thin line? It exists between two colors. You can't see it, but there is somehow still a division. For me, filmmaking is a way to explore those lines."

# New York Jew from rags to writer

By Charles Zhu

Michael Greenberg was a peddler at the bottom of crime-ridden New York society.

He gives a rare glimpse of the city's underworld in this self-examining autobiography *Beg, Borrow, Steal: A Writer's Life*.

Greenberg, the grandson of a hardscrabble immigrant, is a writer prowling his city, notebook at the ready.

*Beg, Borrow, Steal* is an anthology of stories that first appeared in a New York Times Literary Supplement column "Freelance" over six years between June 2003 and January 2009. The stories reveal an interesting facet of his ordinary, yet extraordinary life.

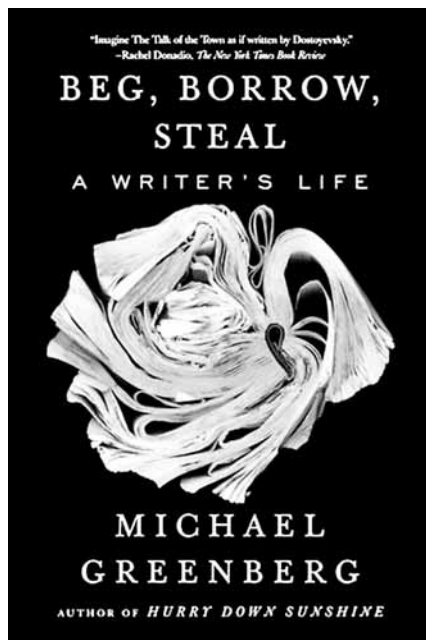
He wrote each to spill a drop of blood – per his editor's request.

"Give it a sense of personal necessity, a sense of urgency," the editor said.

The stories stand testimony to Greenberg's struggles in becoming a writer.

The book covers his tough and proud father, who resented the brainy son's intellectual self-gratification to the point of exchanging blows. The fight sent Greenberg packing, after which he made a living as a bookstore clerk.

Being as humorous as bittersweet, the author devotes space to his artistic first wife, whom he met in a Greenwich Village high school, and to their son,



**Beg, Borrow, Steal: A Writer's Life**  
By Michael Greenberg, 217pp,  
Other Press, \$19.95

who grew up on the Lower East Side and learned both street and parlor language at the School of Hard Knocks.

Tales range from the whimsical, in his encounter with a transsexual or

the childhood friend who was disbarred and imprisoned for "fixing" taxes, to the sappy Holocaust survivor who tried to leave Greenberg his fortune from his deathbed.

Many come from his years spent working odd jobs, which provided abundant opportunity to observe and understand.

He doctored movie scripts; sold cosmetics from an ironing board in front of a women's department store; wrote about golf, a sport he never played; and worked as a waiter in a posh restaurant. He was also a postal clerk, a Spanish teacher to go-go boys in Lower Manhattan, an interpreter for Spanish-speaking defendants in court, a ghost writer for other people's memoirs and a cab driver.

"I figure that I have spent more than 50,000 hours in [my] room and wonder aloud if the products of those hours – from a first novel brought to an end because I couldn't bear to revise it anymore, to the voice-over narration for a television program about golf – have configured themselves into a single repellent mass," he writes, talking about his home of 25 years: a shabby workroom in West Village.

If nothing else, that humble living has given him 217 pages of stories – from street rats to soup kitchens – that he can be proud of.



Chen Man

## Fashion photographer Chen Man's first collection

in Beijing. It is the first comprehensive survey of Chen's career and covers the spectrum of the artist's photography, from her earliest cover shoots to her latest works of 2009.

Her works combine a range of elements from international pop culture and Chinese cultural identity and have been shown at exhibitions both in China and overseas, including at the landmark exhibition "China Design Now" (2008) at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, for which she produced the signature visual image.

Chen started drawing at two years old when she saw a rat in her house. Her mother saw her drawing and sent Chen to study painting.

She has a strong eye to bringing out the best of the female figure, both the weird and sexual. By presenting postures with clear sex appeal, Chen uses the female form to create tender and vigorous images.

"I'm obsessed with the female body and have a visual desire for beauty," Chen said, adding that this fascination began when she was a little girl.

Her first encounter with fashion images was from calendars in the 1980s, which she said fit the aesthet-

ics of the time.

Karen Smith, one of the world's foremost experts on contemporary Chinese art, contributed articles and interviews to the book.

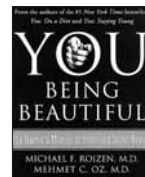
The Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Liu Heung Shing discusses the artist's work in context and provide an insight into Chen's working processes and inspirations.



**Chen Man: Works 2003-2010**  
By Karen Smith and Liu Heung Shing, 160pp, 3030 Press, 300 yuan

## CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

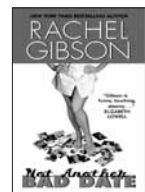
The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends these new arrivals to Beijing Today readers.



**You: Being Beautiful**

By Michael F. Roizen and Mehmet C. Oz, 432pp, Free Press, 140 yuan

Most people think beauty revolves around lipstick, sweet eyes or skinny jeans – what we can see in the mirror. But beauty is not some superficial pursuit, and it is not some random act for which you can thank or curse your ancestors. There are scientific standards to beauty. Beauty is purposeful, because it is how humans have historically communicated who we are to potential mates: it is about your health and happiness.



**Not Another Bad Date**

By Rachel Gibson, 384pp, Avon, 65 yuan

The author focuses on a familiar dilemma: how to end bad luck in love. At 35, successful novelist Adele Harris has had it with losers who make fun of her fat ass. She feels cursed – and she was, by old rival Devon Hamilton Zemaitis, who stole Harris' first love, football star Zach Zemaitis. When Devon dies following an accident, she must remove the curse that is preventing Harris' happiness so she can go to heaven.



**Chill Factor**

By Sandra Brown, 416pp, Pocket, 90 yuan

Cleary, North Carolina, is a sleepy mountain town – the kind of place where criminal activity is usually limited to parking violations. Not so, lately. Four women have disappeared from Cleary over the past two years. And there is always a blue ribbon left near the spot where each was last seen. There are no bodies, no clues and no suspects. And now, another woman has disappeared without a trace.

(By He Jianwei)



# Pedal freaks transform music

By Wang Yu

The Beatles, The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Cream and U2 forever changed the image of rock and roll and made the guitar the world's most popular instrument.

But most listeners have no idea how such fantastic sounds can come from six simple strings.

The answer is in the pedals, special effects devices that act as a pass-through between the guitar and amplifier. Using pedals, a guitar can make the magical and metallic delays that leave listeners in awe.

In China, the electric guitar was grown popular with the local rock scene. Until relatively recently, the instrument was inaccessible to most aspiring rockers. But in the era of the Internet, guitar fans are quick to get a jump on lost years of experience by sharing knowledge online.

## The first pedals

When Eric Liang bought his first electric guitar in 1999, the instrument was still considered a luxury. A year later, he plugged into an effect pedal: a device that boosted delay and gave his guitar a spacey feel.

In 2003, he plunked down the cash to buy his own first pedal, a Boss DS-2 distortion pedal like the one used by Kurt Cobain, his guitar idol and former front-man for Nirvana.

"I was still a beginner at using the effects. Guitar players didn't have many options on the local market," Liang says.

Like most post-1980s musicians, he had to wait for financial independence before he started to collect pedals. New rockers started off cheap and easy, working on their playing skills and trying to emulate their favorite musicians.

But the pedal was essential.

"Pedals are the most wonderful inventions in the history of modern music. David Gilmour could not have given soul to Pink Floyd's 'Dark Side of the Moon' without something between his guitar and the amp," says Tommy Huang, a bass player in local band Elenore.

"Fans can try to copy, but plugging into a pedal opens new worlds," he said.

Even the quality of common effects can vary wildly from pedal to pedal. Each pedal can be distinguished by small differences.

Liang has 15 pedals in his practice room. Like other pedal lovers, he buys and sells a lot. His collection peaked at 28 pedals – an impressive number even for a professional.

## A lifestyle

Though Liang majored in English, his love for guitar kept him studying the instrument.

After he graduated in 2007, he started working for an instrument company in Danshui, Guangdong Province, which made OEM products as well as its own line. He works in overseas marketing and design.

"Before I joined the company, I learned the basics online. The job gave me a chance to use the latest products before they hit the market," Liang says.

In January, Liang took a business trip to Anaheim, California, to join the NAMM show, one of the largest music product trade shows in the world. Before that, he visited

Musik Messe in Frankfurt.

This year he brought back a Diamond Tremolo pedal, a high quality device that comes at a high price, to test and review on Pedal Freaks, a well-known site in the guitar community that he runs with Alex Zhen.

"Alex is a very talented guitar player and there are a lot of enthusiasts around us. We started as a group on douban.com and then built the site hoping to offer native guitar players useful test results, pictures and sound demos. Though I work in the industry, Pedal Freaks is not a commercial site – we aim to share," Liang says.



The secondhand forum on guitarchina.com is one of the most popular BBSees for pedal lovers. From ordinary pedals to vintage gear, users can find some amazingly low prices. Sometimes they can find even rare pedals at a low price.

"It's like collecting antiques which is fun when you're hunting down a specific product in China, America, Europe or Japan. But it also gives you a chance to learn and play more, which is important for those who make music," Huang says.

In China, the community of pedal lovers is small compared to the overseas scene. One reason is that the hobby is still new to mainstream music fans. The market is small and relevant resources are limited.



Eric Liang is a good adviser of choosing the right pedal among the players.

Photos by Eric Liang



"From 2000 to 2010, the native scene grew very fast – many fans get involved in addition to the professionals. Some are as good as the best foreign players,"

Liang says.

## The role of music

Guitarists bend sound into unique tones. Some pedals are done as a DIY project. Liang has pedals made by Mheavy, a DIYer in Hong Kong who customized the device base on the player's sound.

CatSound is another native brand founded in 2007 by players who were electronics experts. Liang gave two CatSound pedals to his US clients as gifts.

But pedal love can end up a rabbit hole. Many of the top collectors make little real progress with their guitar skills.

"It happens a lot. Years later you find out you are a geek rather than a guitarist. The most important thing is to keep a balance between obsession about the instrument and your music," Liang says.

"A great pedal always brings inspiration. But different people want different things. Some don't care about music that much, they just collect pedals like stamps," Liang says.

Though known as one of the top pedal collectors in China, Liang says he never forgets the music. His old band Gossip was interviewed by mainstream music magazines, MTV and joined a Zippo tour. The band broke up when he left Xi'an for Guangdong.

"I'm still planning to organize a new band to make trip-hop or post rock. It's the guitar music that attracts me and the pedals build on the beauty of guitar. You can never describe the color of sound made by a great pedal with words. Collecting pedals has cost me a lot of money, but it also left me with beauty that money can't buy," Liang says.

## Brief history of pedals

### 1960s

Guitar effect pedals were created and defined a generation of music. Roger Mayer is credited with creating the first effects, then used by Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck and Jimi Hendrix. Some of Roger's earliest devices have been recreated and are reissued today.

### 1970s

The fuzz box and wah-wah effects were born. Again they were invented by Mayer. These pedals became the most widely used effects pedals among guitarists, especially throughout the late 1960s and all through the 1970s.

### 1980s

In the 1980s, Tom Scholz, an MIT grad and member of the rock band Boston, created the Rockman – a portable mini guitar amp with signature Boston effects built in. In the mid-1980s came the digital era. Digital-effects pedals and multi-effect pedals were invented. These electronic devices could activate several effects at a time.

### 1990 – present

Amplifiers are made with hundreds of effects built in. Computer technology has also been adopted by live venue and studios to allow the guitarist to create new sounds on demand. But the old technology is far from abandoned: pedals with analog circuits still offer the best sound quality.

By Wang Yu

Hand-made products will never go out of style because there is a certain thrill in owning something that is one-of-a-kind – whether toys, bath products or goodies.

In honor of International Women's Day next Monday, Beijing Today presents three hand-made products to help express appreciation for the special women in your life. There's something here for mother, sister, wife or girlfriend.

# Hand-made gifts for Women's Day



Chocolate box, 69 yuan



Chocolate box, 69 yuan

## Bundles of creativity and cheer

All dolls by NO3NO4 are made out of socks, an art its designer Chen Li learned from a Japanese magazine. A doll lover since childhood, Chen began experimenting with designs at home and established the brand in 2007.

Each NO3NO4 doll is hand made by craftswomen working at Chen's studio in Zhejiang Province. Another thing that makes the dolls unique is the sock patterns that make up their bodies. Chen initially bought the socks from markets; now she designs them herself, then stuffs them into every imaginable shape. Each doll is limited to 500 copies – a minute number in the retail world.

After participating in several bazaars gatherings of individual designers, Chen joined other Chinese designers in an exhibition in Stockholm in August 2008. To her surprise, her creations were warmly received by an international audience. Through the event, she got a chance to collaborate with big brands like Swatch and other firms from North America, Europe and Australia. Her dolls can now be found in chain stores all over the world.

Chen says her dolls reflect her attitude toward life: she has special regard for creativity and maintains a leisurely pace. Because of polio at age 3, the designer uses a wheelchair to move around. But she says it was her disability that helped her develop an optimistic outlook, and taught her not to linger on success or failure.

In this Year of the Tiger, NO3NO4 has released special-edition tiger dolls. Chen asks the doll's buyers to take a photo of the dolls in their new home and send the pictures to her. (Her contact details can be found on the doll's packaging). Chen also welcomes stories about NO3NO4 dolls on her website.

**NO3NO4**

Web: no3no4.taobao.com

Open: 8 am – 11 pm, when there is a sales assistant to answer buyers' questions online



Tiger doll, 98 yuan

Photo provided by Chen Li

## When bittersweet meets dark beauty

Few associate Beijing with exquisite chocolate. But hope is not lost for local chocolate connoisseurs with the opening of Anuca, a Taobao store that specializes in hand-made dark chocolate.

Zhang Ting, the shop owner, learned to make chocolate in college and decided to set up Anuca last year. To ensure the quality of her products, Zhang went on an extended tour of Europe to source for the best ingredients.

Anuca's signature chocolate is dark chocolate that uses pure cocoa butter, little sugar and no coloring – heaven for chocolate fans. We also recommend Anuca's dark truffles: their smooth flavor glides on your tongue and the seasoned dry cocoa powder gives a bittersweet hint.

For something fancier, try rum, green tea or hazelnut paste. If you want something with a crunch, get the peanut or almond praline. The company accepts special orders.

Customers can place orders online. Anuca also does deliveries: allow one to two days for orders within Beijing and three to five days for those outside the city.

**Anuca Chocolate**

Web: Anuca.taobao.com

Open: 10 am – midnight, when there is a sales assistant to answer buyers' questions online

Tel: 13699126077



Chocolate ball, 19.9 yuan for 100 grams

## Luxury soap from nature

Organic Earth, one of the top three "cold-crafted" soap brands in the world, was born in the Beijing suburban kitchen of its founder, Darren Moore.

Moore, who used to work as a marketing director for Bell, Canada's biggest IT company, came to China in 1996 to join a company project in Yantai, Shandong Province. It was there that he met his wife Zhang Ping, who was working on the same project.

The couple decided to settle in Beijing, but the city's dry winters ruined Moore's skin. His skin was already very dry to begin with and the situation only worsened. He tried every medical treatment available – no matter the cost – but nothing helped. One day, he decided to make his own soap at home, since he had gotten tired of commercial products that did not work.

Moore adopted cold crafting, a traditional soap-making method that uses no extra heat during the manufacturing process. He took fresh, specially chosen flowers and plant oils, gently warmed them to their melting points and then slowly mixed them with an alkaline solution.

After months of experimenting, Moore eventually perfected his formula, which resulted in soaps that became a hit online. His first orders came from the US.

Ninety-eight percent of Organic Earth's raw materials are imported to ensure the products' quality, Moore says. Compared with commercial brands, the company's hand-made soaps melt faster and cost a bit more since they do not include preservatives or synthetic ingredients.

Besides soaps, Organic Earth's latest collection also includes shea butter lotion and bath salts. These are the perfect antidote to a long, tiring day at work.

**Organic Earth**

Wangjing branch

Where: 2/F, CapitaRetail Mall, 33 Guangshun

Bei Dajie, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6479 1854

Open: 9 am – 9 pm

Taobao store

shop35287875.taobao.com



Organic shea butter facial bar, 60 yuan



Shea butter, 122 yuan

Photo provided by Organic Earth



By Annie Wei

As Beijing enters its fifth month of winter, people are already impatient for the weather to warm up so they can enjoy dining and partying outdoors again. In the mean time, we have to content ourselves with the next best thing: restaurants with a picturesque view. This week, *Beijing Today* presents a new teahouse and two Chinese restaurants with lovely courtyards.

## Sichuan food born in a salt-mining town

By Annie Wei

Among hundreds of Sichuan restaurants in town, Jinfu Yanbang stands out for offering Yanbang food, a specialty of the well-salt-producing town called Zigong.

For hundreds of years, Zigong's salt wells attracted businessmen from all over the country, with 200,000 people involved in the industry at its peak in Qing Dynasty. The local economic boom gave birth to a style of cooking called Yanbang, characterized by strong and rich flavors.

The emperor soup is a good starter. It uses selected ingredients like seafood and is cooked for 28 hours. An order costs 38 to 228 yuan, depending on the ingredients picked.

Tuqiuyu dual hot pot (128 yuan) is our most recommended dish. Tuqiuyu, a type of eel that can only be found in the Yangtze River gorges, has tender meat that can equal those of 10 fish, but without the small bones found in fish. It is caught only in autumn, hence its name. The hot-pot broth comes in two flavors: light and spicy.

Many dinners also like the sauteed beef with sauce (58 yuan), crispy delicacies with flavor (68 yuan), which includes rabbit belly; braised tofu in a bowl (28 yuan); the sour and spicy noodle soup with flavor (38 yuan); and steamed pumpkin with sauce (30 yuan).

For cold dishes, try braised goose intestine with fern root noodle (28 yuan) or blended cucumber with mint leaf (18 yuan).

The restaurant is housed in a three-story building with wooden floors and stairs. Each floor has a high ceiling and the walls are adorned with old photos of Zigong's salt-mining industry: businessmen, workers in the salt wells and the town's main streets.

The building overlooks a charming courtyard with a pool, fenced in by tall brick walls. It is worth returning here on a summer evening.

Jinfu is always packed, so it's a good idea to call to reserve a table.

### Jinfu Yanbang

Where: 31 Zhongguancun Nan Dajie, Haidian District

Open: 6819 6222, 6819 6773

Tel: 11 am – 9 pm



Blended cucumber with mint leaf, 18 yuan



Sauteed beef with sauce, 58 yuan

Photos by Huang Xiao

# Courtyard teahouse and restaurants



Inside the teahouse



Podao Caotang's courtyard

Photos provided by Pudao Caotang

## Time for tea and books

By Annie Wei

Interesting places spring up in the hutong off Nanluogu Xiang. One of the newest is Pudao Caotang Bookstore, which draws crowds of young people for its books and poetry readings.

For refreshments, Pudao offers coffee and tea, including pu'er, longjing and biluochun. The teas are personally selected by the shop's owner Zhou Yifang, who converted the two-story courtyard building into a teahouse and bookstore last year.

A cup of tea costs 30 yuan for non-members. Die-hard tea lovers might want to consider applying for a membership – 3,600 yuan a year – to enjoy unlimited cups of tea each visit.

The teahouse's first floor has a few tables and chairs, but the spotlight is undeniably on the shelves of books for sale. Some of the tomes, published 10 years ago, Zhou scavenged from a publishing firm's abandoned warehouse.

"There are no marketing or business books here, no matter how good they are. All the books sold here are novels, philosophy books and fiction that I like," Zhou says.

The second floor has three function rooms for film screenings, meetings or lectures, which cost 5,000 yuan a day to rent. But for noncommercial events like book club meetings, art-film showings or elite salons, Zhou allows free use of the rooms.

He particularly favors book events. "People can assess the quality of their life through books," Zhou says, adding that reading helps urban dwellers slow down and enjoy their life.

When Zhou is in the mood, he will cook and invite customers to share a meal with him.

### Pudao Caotang Bookstore

Where: 4 Mao'er Hutong, Nanluogu Xiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 8403 6168

## Jiangzhe cuisine that tastes right

By Annie Wei

Fengsao Zheren specializes in Jiangzhe cuisine, food from southern neighboring provinces Jiangsu and Zhejiang. Few restaurants in town can get Jiangzhe right; Fengsao is one of the few.

The restaurant has two dining rooms and a simple courtyard. The bigger room has 10 tables with big glass window; the furniture and tableware are surprisingly Western.

*Beijing Today* recommends Fengsao's huaiyang jidan shizitou, stewed pork meatball with duck egg yolk in broth (18 yuan each), and Yangzhou paigu (58 yuan), nine pieces of Yangzhou-style pork ribs.

A traditional Jiangzhe dish one should try is shoubosun (18 yuan), steamed hand-peeled bamboo shoots with the outer layers intact to preserve the flavor.

Another local favorite is songsao yugeng (18 yuan), a soup that features crabmeat, fish, bamboo shoots, mushrooms and ham – thick, rich and slightly peppery. This is a classic Hangzhou dish, but some people commented on dianping.com, a national restaurant review site, that they were not happy with Fengsao's version.

Fried beef Hangzhou style (28 yuan) – which tastes like burger – is served with lettuce and crispy youtiao, deep-fried fluffy dough sticks. The first few bites might be heavenly, but don't order too much: the more you eat, the sweeter and saltier it tastes.

Note that northerners not used to the lighter taste of southern food might not enjoy Jiangzhe cuisine. The dishes also come in smaller servings, so be careful who you invite; you might never hear the end of the complaints from friends or family. Some people might complain that the restaurant is expensive. But compared to others on Jingbao Jie, it is a good choice for a simple and comfortable meal.

The restaurant offers 50 percent off certain dishes daily. Discount coupons are also available online, like 24quan.com.

### Fengsao Zheren

Where: 35-37 Jiangbao Jie, Dongcheng District

Open: 11:30 am – 2 pm, 6-9:30 pm

Tel: 8666 3236



Mushroom, 28 yuan



Vegetables, 22 yuan

Photos by Wendy Zha

# Emotional life of women



By He Jianwei

Women "embody" different colors at different stages in their life. This is the premise behind Beijing Contemporary Dance Theater's *The Color of Love*, a modern ballet that explores the emotional life of women in their 20s, 30s and 40s and their feelings about love, sex and family.

Through images like the gate, roof and bed, the piece examines how women struggle with and against men to find intimacy, how they seek trust and passion, stability and adventure, and how these desires are satisfied or frustrated.

Wang Yuanyuan, among the country's leading choreographers, created *The Color of Love* for the Royal Danish Dance Theater in 2006. It was the first time the company commissioned work from a Chinese choreographer, and the piece debuted in Copenhagen the same year.

In 2008, Wang founded Beijing Contemporary Dance Theater but did not think the time was right to stage *The Color of Love* in China. "The Royal Danish dancers had good training both in classic ballet and modern dance, so they easily achieved what I wanted them to do. But the ballet dancers in our country only received traditional dance training," she said.

Last year, she thought her dancers were finally ready.

The ballet consists of three parts: Sprouting shows the attraction, hopes and desires between a man and woman in the early stages of love; Betrayal describes the dilemmas within a maturing relationship; and Exile reveals the selfishness, hysteria and mental struggles associated with traditional marriage beliefs.

The piece has no plot. "I just show women's emotions and attitudes toward love at different ages," Wang said.

In their 20s, women are filled with dreams and driven by their impulses. "Life is filled with different colors and resembles music with a fast rhythm," the choreographer said.

In their 30s, women slow down their pace and experience hesitation and tension about the future. "If she has had no direction in her 20s, she must make a decision about her future in her 30s," Wang said.

In their 40s, women calm down. "This is the ideal age in my opinion – although I'm just in my 30s – being neither happy nor sad because you have experienced everything in your 20s and 30s," she said.

## The Color of Love

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: March 6, 7 pm  
Admission: 80-180 yuan  
Tel: 6275 8452

## Friday, March 5

### Exhibition Han Xucheng Solo Exhibition

Where: Today Art Museum, Building 4, Pingod Community, 32 Baiziwan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 14, daily except Monday, 10 am – 5 pm  
Admission: 20 yuan, 10 yuan for students  
Tel: 5876 9804

### Movie

#### Chicken Rice War (2000)

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 1 pm  
Admission: 30 yuan  
Tel: 8229 6153

#### Dawson Isla 10 (Dawson Island 10, 2009)

Where: Instituto Cervantes, 1

Gongti Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm  
Admission: Free (reservation by email necessary)

Email: cultipek@cervantes.org.cn

### Nightlife

#### O Ever Youthful, O Ever Weeping

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8:30 pm  
Admission: 50 yuan advance purchase, 60 yuan at the door  
Tel: 6586 0065 ext. 8213

#### Todd Bodine Live

Where: Lantern, B1, 3-3 Mall, 33 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm  
Admission: 50 yuan  
Tel: 13810347555

## Saturday, March 6

### Exhibition The Secret Language of Women

Where: Yuanfen New Media Art

Space, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until April 10, daily except Monday and Tuesday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free  
Tel: 5978 9896

#### A World of Yesterday and Tomorrow

Where: Chambers Fine Art, Red No. 1-D, Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until April 11, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 5127 3298

### Movie

#### Dying in Athens (2006)

Where: French Cultural Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm  
Admission: Free

Tel: 6553 2627

#### Hibiscus Town (1986)

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, North section of the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 2 pm  
Admission: 20 yuan, 15 yuan for students  
Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

### Nightlife

#### Beyond the Ocean

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm  
Admission: 60 yuan advance purchase, 80 yuan at the door  
Tel: 6404 2711

#### Ma Tiao Unplug

Where: Weibozhiyan Club, Room 2308, 3/F North Building, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm  
Admission: 30 yuan advance purchase, 40 yuan at the door  
Tel: 5900 0969

## Sunday, March 7

### Exhibition Home Project – Milla-Kariina Oja Solo Exhibition

Where: Three Shadows Photography Art Center, 155 A Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 27, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6432 2663

### Movie

#### Akamas (2006)

Where: French Cultural Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6553 2627

#### Technotise: Edit i ja (Edit and I, 2009)

Where: Canadian International School of Beijing, 38 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6465 7788

### Nightlife

#### Dong Zi – Ballad Night

Where: D-22, 242 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 9 pm  
Admission: 40 yuan, 30 yuan for students  
Tel: 6265 3177

#### Belcea String Quartet

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: 7:30 pm  
Admission: 30-580 yuan  
Tel: 6417 7845



## Upcoming

### Drama

#### Hanging Garden Murder Case

Where: Fengchao Theater, 12 Dongzhimen Wai Dajie, Dongcheng District  
When: March 11-14, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 50-200 yuan  
Tel: 6415 7332

## Stage in April

### Concert

#### Francesco Piemontesi Piano Recital

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: April 4, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 90-380 yuan  
Tel: 6417 7845

#### David Braid Jazz Piano Recital

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: April 10, 7 pm  
Admission: 100-280 yuan  
Tel: 6275 8452

### Dance

#### Pharaoh's Daughter – Bolshoi Theater China Tour

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: April 30 – May 2, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 280-1,280 yuan  
Tel: 6655 0000

### Drama

#### 21 Carat

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: April 13-18, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 100-680 yuan  
Tel: 6551 8058

#### TNT's Macbeth

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: April 23-25, 7 pm  
Admission: 100-200 yuan  
Tel: 6275 8452

#### Design for Living

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: April 29 – May 3, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 100-880 yuan  
Tel: 6551 8058

### Musical

#### I Have a Date With Spring

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: April 7-11, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 180-580 yuan  
Tel: 6551 8058

### Opera

#### Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: April 24-27, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 280-1,280 yuan  
Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)



# Stop your kids from developing ADHD

By Li Zhixin

Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most commonly diagnosed mental disorders in children. The condition is usually described as an inability to sit for a long time or concentrate on a single task or activity till it ends.

Genes have long been thought to play a pivotal role in the onset of ADHD, but a new research suggests lead exposure may also be to blame.

## ADHD linked to lead

Genetics are blamed for 70 percent of the cases of ADHD in children. But researchers trying to determine the cause of the other 30 percent now consider lead a prime suspect, according to the American Association of Psychological Science.

Lead, a neurotoxin, is present in trace amounts in soil, drinking water, children's costume jewelry and imported candies. Nearly all children in the US have measurable levels of lead in their bodies, the association reports.

In one recent study examining the possible link, researchers found that children with ADHD had slightly elevated levels of lead in their blood. Another study showed an association between elevated levels of lead and parent or teacher recognition of ADHD symptoms, including hyperactivity and attention problems.

In both studies, the link was independent of the child's IQ, family income, race or whether their mothers smoked during pregnancy.

The findings suggest that lead may be a cause of ADHD, said Joel Nigg, director of Psychology at Oregon Health & Science University. He said lead could disrupt brain activity in a way that mimics ADHD symptoms.

The studies were published in the February issue of the journal *Current Directions in Psychological Science*.

"Lead poisoning is entirely preventable. For example, if you're a fan of hand-me-downs, you should probably go through your children's toys very carefully and get rid of anything you suspect might have lead paint," Lu Xiaoyan, a doctor of the Psychological Outpatient Service at Beijing Children's Hospital, said.

"Secondhand toys are cheap, but healthy children are priceless," Lu said.



## How to reduce symptoms

Children with ADHD have impaired functioning at home, school and in relationships with their peers. Ignoring ADHD will not make it go away.

In fact, untreated ADHD can have long-term adverse effects well into adolescence and adulthood.

No one is sure whether ADHD can be prevented, but certain things can avert the onset of symptoms, Lu said.

### 1. Proper prenatal care

Some believe improper prenatal care leads to ADHD. Pregnant women should try to live a healthy life during pregnancy. Eat a balanced diet and avoid dangerous eating habits. Alcohol and tobacco are two known links to the condition.

### 2. Limit sugar intake

While there is no proof that sugar intake will cause ADHD, many experts believe eating less or no sugar may reduce hyperactivity. "Sugar enters the bloodstream directly and rapidly. This may lead to the production of excess adrenaline which will cause the child to want to be active," she said. "Foods that make children overactive should be removed from their diet in order to prevent hyperactivity."

### 3. Structured routine

This is good training for all children. They will grow up to be well organized and will have clear expectations. When this is done, even children who have been diagnosed with ADHD can benefit. "Parents should establish routines for their children for when to wake up, eat, play, do homework and watch TV. Once these habits are ingrained, symptoms of ADHD may be controlled or eliminated," she said.

### 4. Behavior management

Creating a positive parent-child relationship is the first step in this direction. This calls for spending quality time with children. "Parents should allow their children to choose what to do and allow them to do it without much intervention," she said. "Praise and other positive reinforcements should be used to encourage the child to focus on what they do." Don't expect too much, less your children lose focus.

### 5. Attention-building skills

Games, puzzles and building with blocks make young children focus on one thing at a time. You can also read to them or tell them stories. It is strongly believed that attention-building skills lead to children becoming more attentive.

## Nutrition supplements for ADHD

"ADHD is likely caused by multiple factors, including nutritional issues. Children and adults with ADHD may have specific nutrient deficiencies that aggravate the condition. The quality of food we eat has a profound affect on ADHD. For many people, nutrition alone can effectively manage it," Lu said.

### 1. Omega-3 fatty acids

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential components of brain cell membranes, including those of neurotransmitter receptors. They also alter signal transduction and electrical activity in brain cells and control the synthesis of chemicals, which may have a direct effect on mood and behavior.

### 2. Magnesium and vitamin B6

Combining magnesium and vitamin B6 has shown promise for reducing symptoms of ADHD. Vitamin B6 has many functions, including assisting in the synthesis of neurotransmitters and forming myelin, which protects nerves. Magnesium is also very important; it is involved in more than 300 metabolic reactions. At least three studies have demonstrated that the combination of magnesium and vitamin B6 improved behavior, decreased anxiety and aggression and improved mobility among children with ADHD.

### 3. Iron

Iron deficiency may be implicated in ADHD, although studies have shown minimal or no effect with iron supplements. Because of the potential toxicity of iron supplements, parents should consult a pediatrician before beginning supplementation.

### 4. Zinc

Zinc plays a role in producing neurotransmitters, fatty acids, prostaglandins and melatonin, and it indirectly affects the metabolism of dopamine and fatty acids. Its role in ADHD remains unclear. However, numerous studies have shown that children with ADHD are often deficient in zinc.

# Chinese women and children in the spotlight

By Zhang Dongya

After four years under construction, the Chinese Museum of Women and Children opened its doors Monday. It has six floors of exhibition halls and a permanent collection of 30,000 pieces showing the living conditions of women and children as far back as the Stone Age, as well as changes in their social status through the ages and their contributions to society.

This is an ideal place to visit to commemorate International Working Women's Day next Monday.



A set of red lacquer furniture used in wedding ceremonies

Photo provided by

Chinese Museum of Women and Children



Many courageous, forward-thinking women emerged in modern times.



Various types of shoes for bound feet, some as short as 10 centimeters



A wedding sedan used in ancient times

The Chinese Museum of Women and Children, located on eastern Chang'an Avenue, stands beside the All-China Women's Federation and the China Women's Activity Center. The museum, designed by the China Aeronautical Project and Design Institute, the China Architecture Design & Research Group and Palmer & Turner Architects and Engineers, is a fusion of white walls, light-grey glass and clean lines and curves that symbolize female elegance.

Its vast collection of cultural artifacts includes costumes, pottery, china, bronze wares and jade pieces gathered from provincial and regional museums.

On its first floor is a multipurpose hall for conferences and seminars on art, culture and technology. There is also a temporary exhibition hall for solo or group art exhibits.

## An epic on Chinese women

The exhibitions on women encompass six halls on floors four through six: covering women of ancient, modern and contemporary, women's art, costume and International Friendship. We recommend that visitors see these first, the main sections of the museum.

The Hall of Women of Ancient China showcases the activities and contributions of women in ancient times. Displays include household tools and equipment, such as pottery and a spinning wheel.

There is a replica of part of a spinning wheel discovered at the Hemudu Culture Ruin, the earliest machine of its kind discovered in the country. There are also bronze mirrors, including one with bird-and-mammal designs and *guiju*, a style popular during the Han Dynasty (202 BC – 220 AD).

In one corner of the hall are a set of red lacquer furniture and a sedan used in weddings. It is called "shili hongzhuang," or "gay dress for 10 miles," reflecting a custom of rich families marrying off daughters south of the Yangtze River.

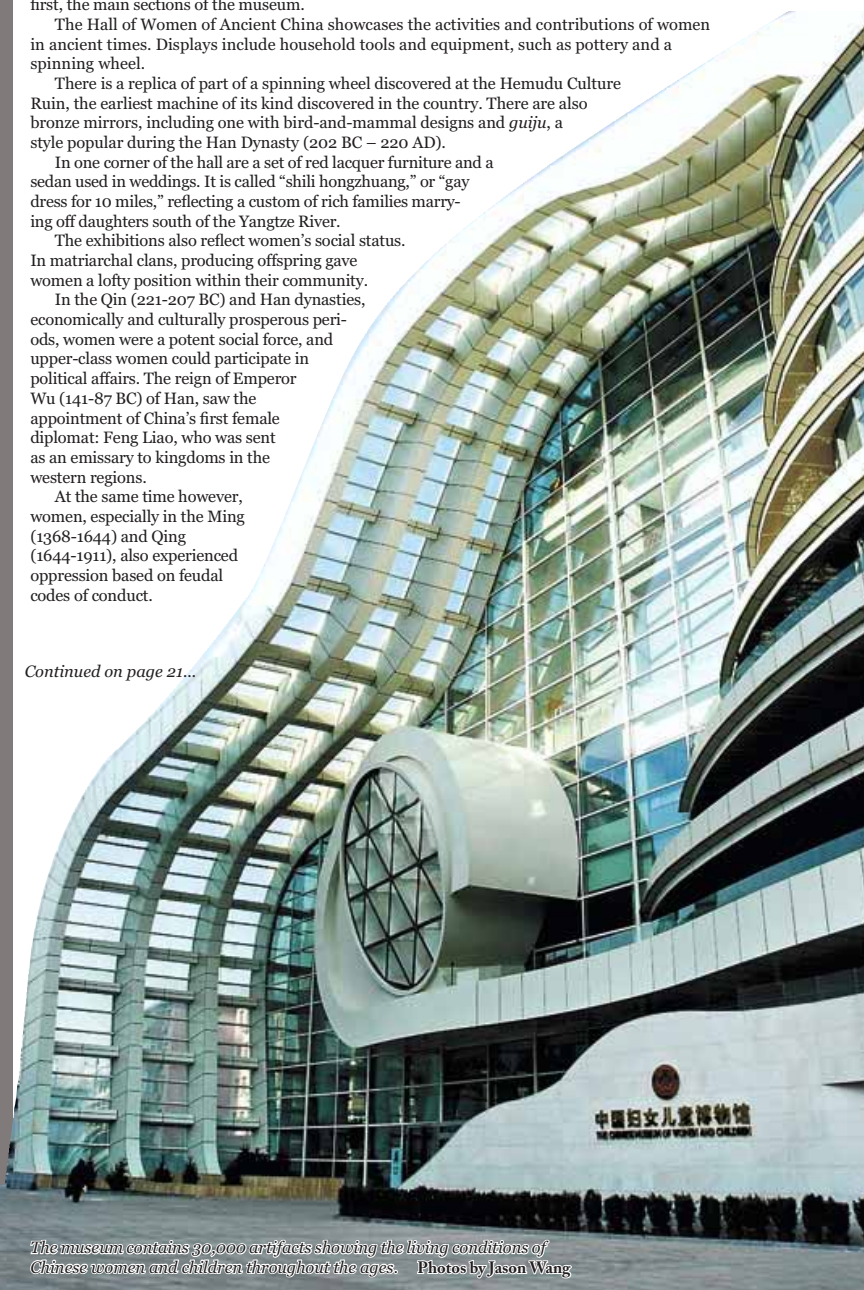
The exhibitions also reflect women's social status.

In matriarchal clans, producing offspring gave women a lofty position within their community.

In the Qin (221-207 BC) and Han dynasties, economically and culturally prosperous periods, women were a potent social force, and upper-class women could participate in political affairs. The reign of Emperor Wu (141-87 BC) of Han, saw the appointment of China's first female diplomat: Feng Liao, who was sent as an emissary to kingdoms in the western regions.

At the same time however, women, especially in the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911), also experienced oppression based on feudal codes of conduct.

Continued on page 21...



The museum contains 30,000 artifacts showing the living conditions of Chinese women and children throughout the ages. Photos by Jason Wang



... continued from page 20

*The Hall of International Friendship tells of Chinese women's contributions to maintaining world peace and promoting the equality of the sexes.*

Photo provided by Chinese Museum of Women and Children



To ensure fidelity to their husbands, Qing women were forced to wear iron chastity belts. News photos from the time shows a woman married to a dead man, represented in the picture by a wooden tablet, and a woman who hanged herself while clutching her dead husband's memorial tablet.

Another infamous ancient practice was foot binding. The museum shows clogs and wood shackles used in binding feet and various types of shoes for bound feet, such as embroidered slippers and boots. Some of the footwear was as short as 10 centimeters and had pointed ends.

The Hall of Women of Modern China features a significant number of women who dared to break free of feudal practices and who joined national revolutions.

Visitors can see some of the weapons these women used, including replicas of broadswords and mao, a kind of pole arm, once used by women soldiers of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

There is also a copy of "Brief Regulations" against foot binding drawn up in 1898 by a pioneering No to Foot Binding Society, whose members included reformist Liang Qichao.

During this period of liberation movements, newspapers and periodicals for women sprang up in large numbers. Women began fighting against oppressive arranged marriages; some joined the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) Long March from 1934 to 1936.

The Hall of Women of Contemporary China showcases women's achievements after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, while the Hall of International Friendship tells of Chinese women's contributions to maintaining world peace and promoting the equality of the sexes.

The Hall of Women's Art shows representative works from various ethnic groups throughout history, such as embroidery, tapestry, paper cuts,

calligraphy and paintings.

Visitors can see the native dress of China's 56 ethnic groups in the Hall of Women's Costume. The clothes reflect the country's diverse cultural makeup and the groups' attitude toward life.

## Concern and care for children

The exhibitions on children are also presented in chronological order, from ancient to contemporary times. On the third floor is a hall of children's toys and another one with interactive exhibits that has yet to open.

In ancient times there were many rituals involving newborns, some of which are still seen today. When a child turned 1, he was given a test: he was asked to choose an object from an assortment of things laid out before him; the object he picked was said to foretell his future profession. Ancient artifacts like longevity lock ornaments and belly bands are on display as well.

A section shows photos of children during war times, such as the War of Resistance Against Japan. There is a picture of children holding Japanese class during the Japanese occupation (1932-1945).

The main children's exhibition is on education. There is a section retelling tales of smart children such as Cao Chong, a son of Cao Cao in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. The ideas of revered educators like Cai Yuanpei, Tao Xingzhi and Lu Xun are also summarized.

In the Children's Hall of Modern China and the Children's Hall of Contemporary China are more displays on child care and education, as well as pieces on children's literature and art and children's organizations like the Boy Scouts, the labor corps and the Anti-Japanese Boy Scouts.

*The children's exhibitions emphasize the value of education.*



*A giant spinning machine that women used in ancient times*



*Gifts and souvenirs, such as tapestry, from various countries*



*A miniature of women's life in a Beijing hutong*

Photos by Jason Wang

## Chinese Museum of Women and Children

**Where:** 23 Jianguomen Nei Dajie, Dongcheng District

**Tel:** 6523 9678, 6526 9456

**Admission:** Free

**Note:** Museum is currently open only to tour groups, on a reservation basis.



*A significant number of women joined national revolutions in modern China.*

## Dining



### Cuisine, Singapore style

Indulge in traditional Singaporean cuisine at Bloo Dining Restaurant. Try innovative combinations of international and Asian cuisines. Select from delicious laksa, Hainanese chicken rice, curry chicken or bak kut teh.

Where: Bloo Dining Restaurant, Regent Beijing Hotel, 99 Jinbao Lu, Dongcheng District  
When: March 15-26  
Tel: 8522 1999 ext. 3623



### Italian Sunday brunch

Asia Bistro hosts an Italian-inspired Sunday brunch with Bellini cocktails and sparkling Prosecco wine. Its Italian chef prepares the most authentic cuisine with a selection of traditional home-made antipasti. Live cooking stations serve local delicacies, world-renowned Italian pastas, desserts and more.

Where: Asia Bistro, JW Marriott Hotel Beijing, 83 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: From March 1, 11:30 am - 3:30 pm  
Cost: 288 yuan (children 6 to 12 half off, under 6 eat free)  
Tel: 5908 8995



### Geoduck promotion

This March, head chef Tian Qiuming has Geoduck dishes in Cantonese and Sichuan styles. He recommends Geoduck sashimi with mustard sauce and Geoduck with fresh pepper and chili sauce.

Where: 21/F Restaurant, The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing, 10 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 6590 5566 ext. 2295



### Crepes Suzette flambe scene

Crepe Suzette is a typical French dessert made of a crepe flambeed with hot caramelized sugar, orange

juice, grated orange peel and liqueur. A scoop of vanilla ice cream on top completes this delicious dessert.

Where: Lobby Lounge, Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: Daily, 6 pm onward  
Tel: 6530 9383



### Fish parade

Chef Yannick Ehrsam imported the noblest fish from France for this unique menu dedicated to the sea.

Where: Le Pre Lantore, Sofitel Wanda Beijing, 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: March 15 - April 19  
Tel: 8599 6666



### Goose promotion

Enjoy mouthwatering spring goose prepared by a team of talented Chinese chefs in a comfortable environment.

Where: Rouge Restaurant, Crowne Plaza Beijing Zhongguancun, 106 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District  
Tel: 5993 8888



### Wind down at Wine Club

Hosted by Hilton's trailblazing sommelier Julia Zhu, the Wine Club takes you on a virtual journey through some of the world's finest wine regions. Wine flights are accompanied by expert commentary and a selection of delectable canapes. The event begins with a creative cocktail and is followed by a fun and informative tasting of five wines.

Where: One East, Hilton Beijing, 1 Dongfang Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: Thursdays, 6:30-10 pm  
Cost: 150 yuan per person (15 percent service fee)  
Tel: 5865 5030

### Delectable tea cuisine

With a nod to centuries of tea tradition, the Summer Palace is showcasing its innovative twist on Chinese Huaiyang and Cantonese cuisine this spring. Cantonese master chef Stanley Yuen and Huaiyang head chef Xin Qing Hou invite you to indulge in the Palace's contemporary and fashionable sauteed shrimp with Longjing tea, braised chicken with chrysanthemum petals and braised black-bone chicken in crusted Pu'er Tea. A frying spring tea performance is available at the restaurant.

Where: Summer Palace, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 6505 5838

## Hotel



### Millennium Hotel Chengdu's grand opening

Millennium Hotel Chengdu, the newest of Millennium Hotels & Resorts China offerings, opened January 29. The Hotel is located in the city's sophisticated urban district, and is surrounded by restaurants, clothing boutiques and recreation facilities. It features 360 elegant rooms with views of Shengxianshu Park and the nearby Zishan Road, also known as European Street.

### Gloria Hotels' management makes Top 10

An award ceremony to recognize outstanding hotel management companies and individual hotel personnel was part of the China Hotel Professional Brand Annual Summit held this year at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse. Gloria Hotels & Resorts was awarded for being in the Top 10 Hotel Management Companies and The Most Outstanding Management Personnel.

### Shangri-La's Kerry Centre in Earth Hour 2010

Shangri-La's Kerry Centre Hotel Beijing will participate in Earth Hour 2010 to save 210 kilowatt hours of energy by powering down for an hour. On March 27, between 8:30 and 9:30 pm, all nonessential lighting in guestroom corridors and staff areas, as well as all exterior lighting, will be switched off to fight global warming.

## Store



### New arrivals at Pantry Magic

Silicone Egg Poacher Floater:

The Poacher is a flexible silicone cooking tool for poaching, baking and molding eggs. It allows you to float and poach an egg in boiling water like a lily pad on a pond. Never be wary of making poached eggs again.

Ceramic Knife:

Pantry Magic's ceramic knife comes with a four-color handle. It holds its edge much longer than steel, lasts months or years without sharpening and it is impervious to food acids that discolor steel products. No metallic taste or smell. Light weight and perfect balance make it a pleasure to use.

(By Sun Feng)



## Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

# Are you a straight man?

By Han Manman

My friend Wang Cheng is planning to go to the US for his master's in business administration. As part of the application requirements, he asked a college professor to write a recommendation letter for him.

Since the professor spoke little English, he wrote the letter in Chinese and asked Wang to translate it. Wang then asked me to double-check his work.

In my experience, letters of academic recommendation are boring, filled with half-empty words of praise, so I quickly scanned it, hoping to finish the task as quickly as possible. But a sentence caught my eye and made me stop: "I've known Wang Cheng for four years and I promise he is a straight man."

That did not sound right. "Why did the professor have to mention Wang being a 'straight man'? What did he mean? Was it because Wang is actually gay?"

Having worked in the media industry for years, I have many homosexual friends and I've learned to tell if someone is gay. But I've known Wang for three years and not once did I think he was gay.

Being a self-confessed gossip, I could not wait to get the real score from Wang.

"Why did you keep the secret from me for such a long time? I thought I was one of your best friends," I accusingly told Wang over dinner. "You should know I don't care if you're gay or not. I have many gay friends."

Wang looked at me like I was crazy. "Huh? What are you talking about? Who told you I was gay?"

"Your professor said in his letter that you're a straight man and he can promise that. That was a strange thing to include in a recommendation letter. If you're not gay, why did he have to specially mention that fact?"

Wang sighed. "The professor meant that I'm an honest and sincere person."



Wang said he checked the dictionary and found that "straight" also meant the same thing.

After hearing his explanation, it was my turn to sigh. I told Wang that if you describe someone as straight, you mean

that the person is heterosexual rather than homosexual.

Sometimes knowing a word's meaning from the dictionary is not enough; you also need to know the proper way to use the word, I told Wang.

## Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

## 1. Statistic

**Professor Zhu Shida (ZS):** Beginners have to be very careful about the usage of statistic and statistics. When statistic means any value, item, or fact used in statistics, it is a noun singular in form, for instance, It is an important statistic. When it comes to statistics, which means numerical facts such as those about people, the weather or business conditions, it is plural in form, for instance, statistics are collected and classified systematically. However, when it comes to mean the science of collecting and using such facts, it is singular in form; for instance, The recent statistics about the sex ratio is very interesting; or Statistics is taught at colleges.

**Native speaker Steven Sandor (SS):** I have to disagree with the professor's example, "The recent statistics about the sex ratio is very interesting." While Merriam-Webster says the word's pluralization depends on context, to me this singular use is a tough sell. The relevant definition for "statistics" reads: "a collection of quantitative data." If we were to substitute the word "collection" in the professor's sentence, it would sound correct. But as a reader and listener, I will first interpret his use as a pluralization of statistic (a datum): this leaves me expecting a "statistics are," since we are talking about several statistics. I have an equally hard time imagining someone shouting "The statistics isn't accurate!" if he takes issue with some collection of data.

## 2. Just because you show up to a poker game with a big stack of chips doesn't mean you will walk away with a big stack.

**ZS:** This is a sentence all right in conversation or colloquialism. But, grammatically speaking, it is not a good sentence for written English. It is not stylish to use the "because" clause as the subject. In idiomatic English, you have "it" to serve as an apparent subject of a clause when the logical subject comes later: It is hard to believe that he is dead. "It" also can serve as the antecedent to any relative pronoun when separated by the predicate. It was a blue car that passed. So, here, it will be more idiomatic and in good style to say: It doesn't mean that you will walk away with a big stack just because you show up to a poker game with a big stack of chips.

**SS:** I would rather a sentence be too oral than too long. But if we are going to declare war on this use of because, I have a much briefer alternative: "Showing up for a poker game with a big stack of chips does not guarantee your leaving with one."

## 3. I can't think of another reason other than driven by sheer greed for his action.

**ZS:** In this sentence, the word "other" is an adverb which means "in a different way" or "otherwise." Let us see an example to show the usage of "other than": I could not do other than I did. The sentence that follows the phrase "other than" is a complete sentence with a subject and a predicate. This means the clause that follows the phrase "other than" has to be complete. In this case, it should be: I can't think of another reason other than being driven by sheer greed for his action. In a more strict, therefore standard, way, it might be: I can't think of another reason other than his being driven by sheer greed for his action. Here, the gerund clause "being driven by sheer greed" is well nigh right for the occasion, modifying the word "reason."

**SS:** This sentence is why we have the em dash: "I can't think of a reason – other than sheer greed – for his action."

## Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

# Don't feed the toilet



By Tiffany Tan

The toilet is a monster gobbling up all manner of things into its enormous belly, so it is not entirely wrong to say "don't feed the toilet."

You can jokingly use the phrase instead of saying, Don't use the toilet (because it is clogged or broken). Imagine going with your nieces and nephews to the zoo and telling them, "Kids, don't feed the animals – and don't feed the toilet." You deserve an "A" for wit and originality.

But this is not what the sign means. The original message in Chinese is pretty common: Don't flush toilet paper into the toilet bowl, and maintain the restroom's cleanliness. The picture even shows an arrow showing where waste paper should go.

I guess whoever wrote the English translation wanted an A for originality. I give the person an A for creativity and originality and an F for accuracy. Restroom signs are serious business, especially if you want more tourist business.

## Movie of the week

*Nine* is a controversial film. Half the viewers love it: the other half hates it. *Nine* is a movie without a middle ground.

Director Rob Marshall is known for *Chicago* starring with Renee Zellweger. In *Nine*, he invites more celebrities from Beverly Hills. To make a musical based on Italian director Federico Fellini's *8 1/2*, Marshall gathered Daniel Day-Lewis, Marion Cotillard, Penelope Cruz, Nicole Kidman, Judi Dench, Kate Hudson, Fergie and Sophia Loren.

Those who love the movie fall for the dance and song. But like many musicals, this one lacks a good story.

Some of the lines in this week's Script were harvested from the film's lyrics. **Synopsis**

Self-centered director Guido Contini finds himself struggling to find meaning, purpose and a script for his latest film. With only a week left before shooting begins, he desperately searches for answers and inspiration from his wife, his mistress, his muse and his mother. As his chaotic profession steadily destroys his personal life, Guido must find a balance between creating art and succumbing to its obsessive demands.



# Nine

(2009)



## Scene 1

(Guido Contini answers questions at the press conference for his new movie.)

**Guido Contini (G):** You kill your film several times. Mostly by talking about it. A film is a dream. You kill it writing it down, you kill it with a camera, your film might come to life

for a moment or two when your actors breathe life back into it. But then it dies again, buried in film cans.

Mysteriously, sometimes, in the editing room ... a miracle happens when you place one image next to another. So that when finally an audience sits in

the dark if you're lucky, very lucky, and sometimes I've been lucky the dream flickers back to life again.

That's why I'm secretive.

**Journalist:** So, what's your favorite pasta?

**G:** Finally, a serious question.



## Scene 2

(In Guido's memory of his childhood, a gypsy woman Saraghina sings.)

**Saraghina:** So you little Italian devils ... You want to know about love? Saraghina will tell you. If you want to make a woman happy, you rely on what you were born with, because it is in your blood.  
Be Italian.

Be Italian.  
Take a chance and try to steal a fiery kiss.  
Be Italian.  
Be Italian.  
When you hold me, don't just hold me, but hold this!  
Please be gentle, sentimental, Go ahead and try to give my cheek a pat.  
But be daring and uncaring.

When you pinch me try to pinch me where there's fat!  
Be a singer.  
Be a lover.  
Pick the flower now before the chance is past.  
Be Italian.  
Be Italian.  
Live today as if it may become your last!

## Scene 3

(Guido and the actress Claudia have just gotten rid of the paparazzi.)

**G:** It's good to see you.

**Claudia (C):** I miss you. We met cause there's no script.

**G:** Why is everybody so suddenly obsessed with (1) a script? Talk to the people who love you in our films. They're not interested in my script! They're interested in the way you turn your head, the way the camera looks past you to the moon, the way you smile a little as you cry, the way you really do blush for (2) the camera. How!? Who even knows, but ... Whatever else it is it's not my script.

(They get out of the car and walk the streets of Rome in the moonlight.)

**C:** So Lilli says I'm playing a million different parts.

**G:** Not a million: 311. You're the Muses, the incredible women who made Italy what it is today. A country run by men, themselves run by women, whether they know it

or not.

**C:** So I am the women behind the great men.

**G:** The great women, in a way, yes. You have this man in the story, and he's ... wants to take hold of everything, devour (3) everything. He can't let anything go, or he doesn't want to. And he changes direction every day because he's lost, he's dying, bleeding to death.

**C:** And these Muses they fall in love with the man?

**G:** Exactly. They fall in love with him.

**C:** I'd rather be the man.

**G:** What?

**C:** I'd rather be the man. (Claudia starts to sing.)

In a very unusual way, one time I needed you.

In a very unusual way, you were my friend.

Maybe it lasted a day.

Maybe it lasted an hour.

But somehow it will never end.  
**C:** These women, who come off their pedestals for a kiss. They're just fantasies.

**G:** No, you misunderstood. (Claudia continues to sing.)

In a very unusual way I think I'm in love with you.

In a very unusual way, I want to cry.

Something inside me goes weak, something inside me surrenders.

And you're the reason why. You're the reason why.

You don't know what you do to me, you don't have a clue.

You can't tell what it's like to be me looking at you.

It scares me so that I can hardly speak.

**G:** She's his inspiration.

**C:** I can't keep playing that part.

**G:** I fall in love with you every time.

**C:** When there's a camera between us?

**G:** No.

**C:** It's not a real person, Guido. And this man you describe, he doesn't know how to love.

**G:** There was a time once we were on location (4). Some

terrible hotel. You were in the room directly above me. I could hear you walking about. And all through the night I wanted to rush up the stairs and hammer on your door until you opened.

**C:** And why didn't you?

**G:** I don't know. I don't know.

(Claudia sings.)  
Special to me in my life, since the first day that I met you.

How could I ever forget you once you had touched my soul.

In a very unusual way, you've made me whole.

**C:** Maybe you should have knocked. Maybe you should've knocked me right off the pedestal. I can't do this anymore.

This is me. And you have a wife who loves you. I'll miss you ... wrong girl.



## Vocabulary

- be obsessed with:** be crazy for
- blush:** to become red in the face
- devour:** to prey upon voraciously
- location:** the set of a film or television series

(By Wang Yu)